A STUDENT IN ARMS

DONALD HANKEY

1509

Anna Sorensen

~~Clifford Walters~~ -
from
Elizabeth

Aug. 1923-

"a book's a magic sort of thing
That makes us sailor, chief
or King"

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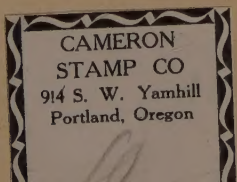

DONALD HANKEY

A Student in Arms

By

Donald Hankey

With an Introduction by

J. St. Loe Strachey

Editor of *The Spectator*

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Mr. Donald Hankey was killed in action on the Western Front on October 26, 1916.

INTRODUCTION

THERE is nothing in literature rarer as there is nothing more attractive than the note of originality. We can all of us now make fairly good copies, but unfortunately a copy, however accomplished, is always a copy. In literature, moreover, we do not merely have first-hand copies of great models, but copies of copies of copies. Smith does not model himself on Stevenson direct, but upon Jones, who again copies from Robinson, who derives through Brown, White, Black, Green, Thompson, and Jackson. What the reader of these Essays, if he has any instinct for letters, will at once observe is the absence of the imitative vein, not only in the presentation of the thoughts but in the thoughts themselves. The Student in Arms cannot, of course, find essentially

new subjects for his pen. It is far too late to be ambitious in that respect. Besides, in dealing with war and the men who go forth to battle, he must necessarily treat of the great fundamental and eternal realities—of life, death, the love of man for his fellows, sacrifice, honor, courage, discipline, and of all their effects upon human conduct. It is in his handling of his themes, in the standpoint from which he views them, that the Student shows the originality of which I speak. The way in which he manages to escape the conventional in word and thought is specially noteworthy. Most men nowadays can only achieve freedom here at a great price—the price of persistent effort. The Student in Arms, like the Apostle, had the felicity to be born free. Nature appears to have endowed him with the gift of seeing all things new. He perpetually puts things in a fresh light, and yet this light is not some ingenious

pantomime effect. It has nothing forced or theatrical or fantastic about it. It is the light of common day, but shed somehow with a difference.

I would rather leave it at that, but if I must try and push my analysis farther, I should say that the special quality of mind that the Student in Arms has brought to his anatomy of the mind and soul of the British soldier—the Elizabethans would have called his book *The Soldier Anatomized*—is his sense of justice. That is the keynote, the ruling passion, of all his writing. There is plenty of sternness in his attitude. He by no means sinks to the crude antinomianism of "to understand all is to pardon all." His ideal of justice is, however, clearly governed by the definition that justice is a finer knowledge through love. He loves his fellow man, and especially his fellow soldier, even while he judges him. That is why his judgments, though they are meant to be

and are practical reports on the mind of the soldier, are in the best sense, works of art. They have in them the essential of all art—passion. It is not enough to say there is no art where there is no passion. Wherever there is passion there is art.

Beyond this originality of view, this finely tempered sense of justice through love, and this passion and so creative force, there is a genial sense of humor and a scholarly feeling for words, which sent the Student in Arms forth wonderfully equipped for the task he has chosen. He is the critic in shining armor who stands guardant regardant beside the soldier in the field.

What is his task? Consciously or unconsciously, I know not which it is, to interpret the British soldier to the nation in whose service he has laid down his life, and dared and done deeds to which the history of war affords no parallel. One rises from the Student's book with a sense that man is, after all, a noble animal, and

that though war may blight and burn, it reveals the best side of human nature, and sanctifies as well as destroys. A passage from one of the articles will show what I mean better than any attempt to anatomize the anatomizer. Here is a picture full of humor, friendliness, and power, of how the "lost sheep" in a Kitchener battalion, what the uninspired and unseeing man would call "the wastrels," take their training—

They plunged headlong down the stony path of glory, but in their haste they stumbled over every stone! And when they did that they put us all out of our stride, so crowded was the path. Were they promoted? They promptly celebrated the fact in a fashion that secured their immediate reduction. Were they reduced to the ranks? Then they were in hot water from early morn to dewy eve, and such was their irrepressible charm that hot water lost its terrors. To be a defaulter in such merry company was a privilege rather than a disgrace. So in despair we promoted them again, hoping that by giving them a little responsibility

we should enlist them on the side of good order and discipline. Vain hope! There are things that cannot be overlooked, even in a "Kitchener battalion."

We see the men before our very eyes in the light of the camp. Now see the Student's revelation of them as they stand in the glory of battle—

Then at last we "got out." We were confronted with dearth, danger, and death. And then they came to their own. We could no longer compete with them. We stolid respectable folk were not in our element. We knew it. We felt it. We were determined to go through with it. We succeeded; but it was not without much internal wrestling, much self-conscious effort. Yet they who had formerly been our despair, were now our glory. Their spirits effervesced. Their wit sparkled. Hunger and thirst could not depress them. Rain could not damp them. Cold could not chill them. Every hardship became a joke. They did not endure hardship, they derided it. And somehow it seemed at the moment as if derision was all that hardship existed for! Never was such a triumph of spirit over matter. As for death, it was, in a way, the greatest joke of all. In a way,

for if it was another fellow that was hit it was an occasion for tenderness and grief. But if one of them was hit, O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory? Portentous, solemn Death, you looked a fool when you tackled one of them! Life? They did not value life! They had never been able to make much of a fist of it. But if they lived amiss they died gloriously, with a smile for the pain and the dread of it. What else had they been born for? It was their chance. With a gay heart they gave their greatest gift, and with a smile to think that after all they had anything to give which was of value. One by one Death challenged them. One by one they smiled in his grim visage, and refused to be dismayed. They had been lost; but they had found the path that led them home; and when at last they laid their lives at the feet of the Good Shepherd, what could they do but smile?

With all sincerity a Commander of to-day might parody Wolfe and declare that he would rather have written that passage than win a general action.

J. St. Loe Strachey.

The *Spectator* Office.

AUTHOR'S FOREWORD

The articles which follow owe their existence mainly to two persons, of whom one is the Editor of the *Spectator*, and the other is—not myself, at any rate. It was the second who made me write them in the beginning, and it was Mr. Strachey who, by his constant encouragement and kindness, constrained me to continue them. If there is, as he says, any freshness and originality in them, it is the result, not of literary genius or care, but of an unusual point of view, due to an unusual combination of circumstances. So let them stand or fall —not as the whole truth, but as an aspect of the truth. In them fact and fiction are mingled; but to the writer the fiction appears as true as the fact, for it is typical of fact—at least in intention.

My thanks are due, not only to the Editor of the *Spectator*, who is godfather to the whole collectively, and to nearly every article individually, but also to the proprietors of the *Westminster Gazette*, to whose courtesy I am obliged for permission to include "Kitchener's Army" and "The Cockney Warrior."

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"KITCHENER'S ARMY"

I

"KITCHENER'S ARMY"

"The New Army," "Kitchener's Army," we go by many names. The older sergeants—men who have served in regular battalions—sometimes call us "Kitchener's Mob," and swear that to take us to war would be another "Massacre of the Innocents." At other times they affirm that we are a credit to our instructors (themselves); but such affirmations have become rarer since beer went up to threepence a pint.

We are a mixed lot—a triumph of democracy, like the Tubes. Some of us have fifty years to our credit and only own to thirty; others are sixteen and claim to be eighteen. Some of us enlisted for

glory, and some for fun, and a few for fear of starvation. Some of us began by being stout, and have lost weight; others were seedy and are filling out. Some of us grumble, and go sick to escape parades; but for the most part we are aggressively cheerful, and were never fitter in our lives. Some miss their glass of claret, others their fish-and-chips; but as we all sleep on the floor, and have only one suit, which is rapidly becoming very disreputable, you would never tell t'other from which.

We sing as we march. Such songs we sing! All about coons and girls, parodies of hymns, parodies about Kaiser Bill, and sheer unadulterated nonsense. We shall sing

"Where's yer girl?
Ain't yer got none?"

as we march into battle.

Battle! Battle, murder, and sudden

death! Maiming, slaughter, blood, extremities of fear and discomfort and pain! How incredibly remote all that seems! We don't believe in it really. It is just a great game we are learning. It is part of the game to make little short rushes in extended order, to lie on our bellies and keep our heads down, snap our rifles and fix our bayonets. Just a game, that's all, and then home to tea.

Some of us think that these young officers take the game a jolly sight too seriously. Twice this week we have been late for dinner, and once they routed us out to play it at night. That was a bit too thick! The canteen was shut when we got back and we missed our pint.

Anyhow we are Kitchener's Army, and we are quite sure it will be all right. Just send us to Flanders, and see if it ain't. We're Kitchener's Army, and we don't care if it snows ink!

AN EXPERIMENT IN DEMOCRACY

II

AN EXPERIMENT IN DEMOCRACY

THE unprecedented had occurred. For once a national ideal had proved stronger than class prejudice. In this matter of the war all classes were at one—at one not only in sentiment but in practical resolve. The crowd that surged outside the central recruiting offices in Great Scotland Yard was the proof of it. All classes were there, struggling for the privilege of enlisting in the new citizen Army, conscious of their unity, and determined to give effect to it in the common life of service. It was an extraordinary crowd. Workmen were there in cord breeches and subfusc coats; boys from the East End in the latest fashions from Petticoat

Lane; clerks and shop-assistants in sober black; mechanics in blue serge and bowler hats; travelers in the garments of prosperity; and most conspicuously well dressed of all, gentlemen in their oldest clothes. It was like a section cut out of the nation.

Men and boys of the working class formed the majority. They were in their element, shouting, singing, cheeking the "coppers" with as much ribald good humor as if the recruiting office had been a music-hall. But some of the other classes were far less at their ease. They had been brought up from earliest youth to thank God that they were not as other men, to set store by the innumerable little marks that distinguished them from "the lower classes." All these they were now sacrificing to an idea, and they felt horribly embarrassed. Even the gentleman, who had prided himself on his freedom from "the snobbishness of the suburbs," felt ill at ease. Of course he had been to working-

men's clubs; but there he had been "Mr. Thingumy." Here he was "mate." He told himself that he did not mind being "mate," in fact he rather liked it; but he fervently wished that he looked the part. He felt as self-conscious as if he had arrived at a dinner party in a Norfolk jacket. A little later on, when he sat, one of four nude men, in a cubicle awaiting medical inspection, he did feel that for the moment they had all been reduced to the common denominator of their sheer humanity; but embarrassment returned with his clothes and stayed with him all through the march to the station and the journey to the depot.

At the depot he fought for the prize of a verminous blanket, and six foot of floor to lie on. When he awoke the next morning his clothes were creased and dirty, his collar so filthy that it had to be discarded, and his chin unshaven. He perceived with something of a shock that he was no longer conspicuous. He was no more than the

seedy unit of a seedy crowd. In any other circumstances he would have been disgusted. As it was, he sought the canteen at the earliest opportunity and toasted the Unity of the Classes in a pint!

All emerged from the depot clothed exactly alike, and meditated on the symbolism of clothes. They donned the gray shirt and ready-made khaki of the new era, and deposited the emblems of class distinction on a common rag-heap. Even the perfunctory manner of the Q.M.S. could not rob the occasion of an almost religious solemnity. It was the formal beginning of a new life, in which men of all classes, starting with something like equality of opportunity, should gain what pre-eminence they might by the merit of their inherent manhood or the seduction of their native tact. Henceforward all fared alike. All ate the same food, slept on the same floor in similar blankets, and in their shirts. Even the

pajamas no longer divided them! All took their share in scrubbing floors and washing dixies; and until the novelty wore off even these menial and dirty jobs caught a certain glamour from the great ideal which they symbolized. Gradually all found their level. The plausible were promoted, found wanting, reduced, and replaced by the men of real grit and force of character. Mechanics joined the machine-gun section, clerks became orderlies, signalers, or telephonists. The dirtiest and most drunken of the old soldiers were relegated to the cookhouse. Equality of opportunity had been granted, and the inequality of man had been demonstrated. It was found that the best formula, after all, was that of St. Paul: "Diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit." Of course it was not a perfect democracy because of the existence of the super-class, the officer. He is really an offense against democracy. He is what he is by Divine right, whether of property or of family

influence. He is above the democratic law of the promotion of the fittest and the reduction of the incompetent. His position is, from the point of view of this article, an anomaly, and is only rendered possible by the survival in the army of democracy of the ancient religion of the army of aristocracy.

This ancient religion is called "Military Discipline." Like other religions, it has its mysteries, its hierarchy, its dogmas and its ritual. We are only concerned with the last two. Both relate to the status of the officer. The dogmas define his position, and the ritual symbolizes it. As in other religions of authority, the dogmas are not required to square absolutely with facts, nor is more than a formal acquiescence demanded from the faithful. For example, it is a dogma that the officer alone possesses common sense. But it has happened that an individual officer has been lacking in this

gift, whereas the sergeant has possessed it. In such circumstances an officer may borrow his sergeant's common sense, and religion is satisfied so long as only the officer exercises it. An officer may even borrow common sense from a private provided that it is done through the medium of an N.C.O. Another dogma is that only officers can think. To safeguard this dogma from ridicule it is necessary that the men should be prevented from thinking. Their attention is to be fully occupied with such mechanical operations as the polishing of their buttons, in order that the officer may think without fear of contradiction. In war, however, if all the officers are killed, the sergeants may think, and if they are killed the corporals may think, and so on; but this is a relaxation of strict orthodoxy, a concession to the logic of facts which must only be permitted in extreme circumstances. The ritual of this religion will be found in the official manuals. This

account of the super-class may sound a little bitter. It is not intended to be so. Most officers of the citizen Army have had an education in skepticism, and possess a sense of humor. They are such good sportsmen that no one minds performing the ritual for their benefit; and as often as not they accept it in the spirit in which it is given.

In due course the citizen Army reached the front. Now the front may be divided into two parts, the trenches and the rest camps. In the trenches the real white man finally and conclusively comes to his own. The worm, no matter how exalted his rank, automatically ceases to count. The explanation of this phenomenon is very simple. In the moment of crisis the white man is always on the spot, while the worm is always in his dug-out. The rest camp, on the other hand, exists for the restoration of the *status quo ante*. It is the trench failure's opportunity to reassert

himself. There the officer or N.C.O. who has lost prestige by his devotion to his dug-out regains it by the repetition of the ritual; and the private who has done ten men's work in repairing the trenches under fire is awarded an hour's extra drill for failing to cut away the left hand smartly. So is the damaged religion of the Army restored. In the rest camp, too, the shirker among the men raises again his diminished head, and comes out strong as a grumbler and, until his mates become unpleasantly reminiscent, a boaster.

On the whole, though, actual experience of war brings the best men to the fore, and the best qualities of the average man. Officers and men are welded into a closer comradeship by dangers and discomforts shared. They learn to trust each other, and to look for the essential qualities rather than for the accidental graces. One learns to love men for their great hearts, their pluck, their indomitable spirits,

their irrepressible humor, their readiness to shoulder a weaker brother's burden in addition to their own. One sees men as God sees them, apart from externals such as manner and intonation. A night in a bombing party shows you Jim Smith as a man of splendid courage. A shortage of rations reveals his wonderful unselfishness. One danger and discomfort after another you share in common till you love him as a brother. Out there, if anyone dared to remind you that Jim was only a fireman while you were a bank clerk, you would give him one in the eye to go on with. You have learned to know a man when you see one, and to value him.

When the war is over, and the men of the citizen Army return to their homes and their civil occupations, will they, I wonder, remember the things that they have learned? If so, there will be a new and better England for the children. One would like to prophesy great things. In

those days great talkers and boasters shall be of no account, for men shall remember that in the hour of danger they were wanting. In those days there shall be no more petty strife between class and class, for all shall have learned that they are one nation, and that they must seek the nation's good before their own. In those days men shall no longer pride themselves on their riches, or on the material possessions which distinguish them from their brethren, for they shall have learned that it is the qualities of the heart which are of real value. Men shall be prized for their courage, their honesty, their charity, their practical ability. In those days there shall be no false pride, for all have lived hardly, all have done dirty and menial work, all have wielded pick and spade, and have counted it no dishonor but rather glory to do so. In those days charity and brotherly love shall prevail mightily, for all shall have learned mutual understanding and respect.

Would that it might be so! But perhaps it is more likely that the lessons will be forgotten, and that men will slip back into the old grooves. Much depends on the women of England. If they carefully guard the ancient ruts against our return, and if their gentle fingers press us back into them, we shall acquiesce; but if at this hour of crisis they too have seen a wider vision of national unity, and learned a more catholic charity, the future is indeed radiant with hope.

DISCIPLINE AND LEADERSHIP

III

DISCIPLINE AND LEADERSHIP

I ONCE met, in an obscure corner of the world, a young priest of the Roman Church who confessed to me quite openly that he was a complete skeptic. He thought, it seemed, that, though the Church had played a necessary and useful part in the development of mankind, the time was very near when its function in history would have been fulfilled, and that it would then share the fate of all obsolete institutions. It was obviously a great relief to him to say this to anyone who mattered as little as myself, and whom he was never likely to meet again; but my reception of his confession astonished him almost as much as his confession had

startled me. Of course what shocked me was that, holding the opinions that he did, he should remain a priest. I felt that his position must be an intolerable and humiliating one, and I immediately offered to help him to make a fresh start in some other profession, where he could regain his self-respect. He thanked me, but coolly informed me that the training which a clergyman received in the Roman Church and the mechanism which he had to use were so perfect that the individual views of the priest did not matter in the least. He himself was perfectly able and content to carry on his work without believing in it, and in many ways it was work that suited him. He understood my amazement. He agreed that in the Reformed Churches such a course would be impossible. There the training of the clergy was so inadequate, and the science of souls so little systematized, that everything depended on the sincerity of the

individual minister; but he assured me that in the Roman Church it was not so.

I do not for one moment suggest that this young priest was in the smallest degree typical of the Roman priesthood; but I can see his point—that where the discipline is strong and procedure stereotyped the strain on the individual leader is very greatly reduced. I have often thought of this point since I enlisted in "Kitchener's Army." Indeed, the difference between the old and new Armies is not at all unlike the difference between the Roman and Reformed Churches.

In the old Regular Army it has always been recognized that all officers and N.C.O.'s could not be expected to be born leaders of men. The whole system of military discipline has been built up with a view to relieving the strain on the individual. The officer's authority is carefully guarded by an elaborate system designed to give him prestige. He is a man apart. He does not mix with the men under his command.

They may not even approach him directly, but only through the medium of an N.C.O. He is always something of an unknown quantity to them, and *omne ignotum pro magnifico*. The N.C.O. is protected by the machinery of discipline. His authority is made to depend as little as possible on his own force of character. He exercises an authority which is vested in the whole body of officers and N.C.O.'s throughout the Army. The smallest piece of impertinence offered to the most junior lance-corporal is, if he likes to make it so, an offense against the discipline of the whole battalion, even of the whole Army, and is punishable as such. He too has to be as far as possible a man apart. He must not have friends among the private soldiers, nor be seen in their company. When he receives his promotion first, he is generally transferred from one company to another. In fact the Regular Army is a magnificent example of the efficiency of discipline.

Theoretically the "New Army" is under the same law as the old, the standard of discipline as high, and the method of enforcing it identical. But as a matter of fact it is quite impossible to enforce such a system in practice. In a Regular battalion the tradition, when once established and accepted, is handed down automatically. The recruits arrive in small batches, and have to adapt themselves to the conditions which they find to be already in existence. If a recruit fails to adapt himself, he is heavily punished, and his life made a burden to him. He has sold himself to his country for a term of years, and his feelings do not have to be considered. He is either "made or broken"—and that is the very phrase which my priest used to describe his training at the seminary. Discipline can be enforced because there is always a majority which has already been inured to it, and an executive of N.C. O.'s who have it bred in the bone. But in a

battalion of the New Army the conditions are wholly different. The vast majority both of the N.C.O.'s and men are, at the time of formation, recruits. They are quite new to discipline, and full of pernicious civilian ideas about "liberty" and "the rights of man." Even if it were possible to enforce discipline by rigorous punishment, such a course would be inadvisable. Recruiting depends for its success very largely on the reports of men newly enlisted as to how they are treated. As long as we have to obtain the largest possible number of recruits in the shortest possible time, the good-will of the men already enlisted is a primary consideration, and discipline must be tempered with tact.

The net result is that a greatly increased strain is thrown on the individual leader. To some extent this applies to all ranks; but it is more especially true of the section leader. The commissioned officer, even in the citizen Army, has a good deal of

prestige as long as he does not give it away. He appears, by virtue of his immunity from manual work and competition, his superior dress and standard of living, to be a higher sort of being altogether. The senior N.C.O. also has a prestige of his own, due to the fact that he is usually an ex-Regular, and has an intimate knowledge of his job, and the manner of one who is accustomed to be obeyed. But the young lance-corporal who is put in charge of a section has absolutely no prestige. A few weeks since he was a recruit himself. Of the work he knows little more than the men. He lives and sleeps and messes with them. They know all his faults and weaknesses a great deal better than he does himself. They are inclined to be jealous of him, and have no respect for him except what he can inspire by his inherent force of character. To a great extent he is dependent on their good-will. They can cover his deficiencies or emphasize them as they

like. If he tries to establish his authority by reporting them, he can by no means count on the sure support of his superiors. Unless they have a very high opinion of him, they will be quite likely to conclude that he is more bother than he is worth, and reduce him to the ranks. In fact, if one wants to study the conditions of sheer natural leadership, one can hardly choose a better subject than the average section leader in a "service battalion."

Of course the types vary enormously. At first it is generally the men who want promotion that obtain the stripe, and they mostly belong to one of two classes. They are either ambitious youngsters or blustering bullies. The youngster who wants promotion has probably been a clerk and lived in a suburb. He is better educated and has a smarter appearance than the general run of the men. He covets the stripe because he wants to get out of the many menial and dirty

jobs incidental to barrack life; because he thinks himself "a cut above" his fellows and wants the fact to be recognized; because, in short, he thinks that as a lance-corporal he will find life easier and more flattering to his self-esteem. He soon finds his mistake. He annoys the sergeant-major by his incompetence and the men by his superior airs. Soon he gets into a panic and begins to nag at the men. That is just what they hate. The whole situation reminds one of nothing so much as of a terrier barking at a herd of cows. As soon as the cows turn on him the terrier begins to waver, and, after trying to maintain his dignity by continuing to bark, ends by fleeing for dear life with his tail between his legs. So the young lance-corporal begins by hectoring the men, and, having roused them to a fury of irritation, ends by abject entreaty. Finally he is reduced to the ranks. The career of the bully is different. He is generally a vulgar,

pushing fellow, who likes boasting and threatening, likes to feel that men are afraid of him, likes to be flattered by toadies, and likes getting men punished. The men hate him; but he sometimes manages to bluff the officers and sergeants into thinking that he is a "smart N.C.O." Usually he comes to a bad end, either through drink or gambling. When he is reduced to the ranks his lot is not an enviable one.

A deplorable number of those who are first promoted finish by forfeiting their stripe. Then comes the turn of the man who does not covet rank for its own sake, but accepts it because he thinks that it is "up to him" to do so. Generally he is a man of few words and much character. He gives an order. The man who receives it begins to argue: it is not his turn, he has only just finished another job, and so on. The N.C.O. looks at him, and repeats: "Git on and do it." The man "curls up," and does as he is told. An

N.C.O. of this sort is popular. He saves any amount of wear and tear, and this is appreciated by the men. He gets things done, and that is appreciated by the sergeants and officers.

Finally, there is the gentleman, who is the most interesting of all from our point of view. He is generally a thoroughly bad disciplinarian in the official sense, and at the same time he is often a magnificent leader of men. He is fair and disinterested. He has a certain prestige through being rather incomprehensible to the average private. He does not care a scrap for his rank. He is impervious to the fear of losing it. He takes it from a sense of duty, and his one idea is to get things done with as little friction as possible. He often succeeds in gaining the confidence of his men, so that they will work for him as for no one else. But, on the other hand, his methods are apt to be quite unorthodox and highly prejudicial to the cause of

discipline as a whole. His authority is so personal that it is very hard for an ordinary N.C.O. to take his place.

A man of this sort was given the stripe while his battalion was in a rest camp in Flanders, and was put in charge of a section which was quite new to him. It was a very uncomfortable camp, and there were endless tiresome fatigues to be done. The men, who had just come out of the trenches, and had been looking forward to a comparatively easy and luxurious time, were in the worst of tempers. The lance-corporal did his best. He tried to be scrupulously fair, and to put each man on fatigue in his turn; but the men were "out for a row." In the afternoon he entered the hut, and detailed one of the worst grumblers for a fatigue. The man started to grumble, and made no sign of moving. The corporal took out his watch and announced that if he did not go in two minutes he would "put him on the peg," which means

report him to the captain for refusing to obey an order. The man was defiant, and remarked that that was all "lance-jacks" were for, to get men into trouble, and that they could not stand up to a fellow as man to man. This was a peculiarly subtle taunt, because of course it would mean instant reduction if an N.C.O. were found fighting with a man. In the interests of discipline, the offender ought to have been made a prisoner at once. This course, however, did not commend itself to the corporal. He was the sort of man who, if he could only maintain his authority by such means, would rather resign it. He put back his watch; explained for the benefit of the audience that it was this man's turn, that he was not an N.C.O. for his own amusement, and that it gave him no pleasure to get men into trouble; and finally ended up by inviting the man to step outside there and then and see whether or no he would stand up to him. The

man collapsed and did as he was ordered, and the lance-corporal was well on his way to winning the respect of his section; but of course he had committed a dire offense against military discipline.

If I am not mistaken, it was the same N.C.O. who, a few days later, was guilty of a similar neglect of duty in the trenches. It was at night, and the trench had been badly damaged by shell-fire during the afternoon. It was necessary to build up the parapet, and owing to the sodden nature of the ground it was not possible to take any more earth from the floor of the trench. In order to fill the sand-bags required, someone had to get out of the trench at the back and dig in the open field. The corporal detailed a man for the job, and the man flatly refused to go. He had not been out long; his nerves had been shaken by the shell-fire that afternoon; he did not like the idea of going out into the open; he was afraid that when the flares

went up the Germans would see him; he was afraid of the rain of random bullets which always falls at night. Of course he ought to have been put under arrest, and tried for (1) cowardice in the face of the enemy, and (2) refusing to obey an order. His punishment might have been "death" or "any less penalty." The corporal knew that there was very little real danger. He looked at the man contemptuously, and went and did the job himself. He had not been at it more than two minutes when the boy—for he was little more—came and joined him.

This N.C.O. certainly gained the respect and confidence of his men, and there is no possession better worth having from the point of view of the individual; but his authority was purely personal, and on the whole bad for discipline. He was to realize it a little later. An officer, who was in charge of a big working party, called for two volunteers to accompany

a corporal in stalking a German sniper. Not a man volunteered. After some minutes, during which the officer appealed and rated in vain, a boy came up to this N.C.O. and asked: "Who's the corporal that's going?" The N.C.O. replied that he didn't know. "Oh," said the boy, with obvious disappointment, "if it had been you I would have volunteered." For the corporal it was at once his reward and his condemnation. He realized then that though it is a fine thing when men trust their leader and will follow him anywhere, it is a still finer thing when they will stand by any leader, whether they know him or not; and this last is the fruit of perfect discipline.

THE BELOVED CAPTAIN

IV

THE BELOVED CAPTAIN

He came in the early days, when we were still at recruit drills under the hot September sun. Tall, erect, smiling: so we first saw him, and so he remained to the end. At the start he knew as little of soldiering as we did. He used to watch us being drilled by the sergeant; but his manner of watching was peculiarly his own. He never looked bored. He was learning just as much as we were, in fact more. He was learning his job, and from the first he saw that his job was more than to give the correct orders. His job was to lead us. So he watched, and noted many things, and never found the time hang heavy on his hands. He watched our evo-

lutions, so as to learn the correct orders; he watched for the right manner of command, the manner which secured the most prompt response to an order; and he watched every one of us for our individual characteristics. We were his men. Already he took an almost paternal interest in us. He noted the men who tried hard, but were naturally slow and awkward. He distinguished them from those who were inattentive and bored. He marked down the keen and efficient amongst us. Most of all he studied those who were subject to moods, who were sulky one day and willing the next. These were the ones who were to turn the scale. If only he could get these on his side, the battle would be won.

For a few days he just watched. Then he started work. He picked out some of the most awkward ones, and, accompanied by a corporal, marched them away by themselves. Ingenuously he explained

that he did not know much himself yet; but he thought that they might get on better if they drilled by themselves a bit, and that if he helped them, and they helped him, they would soon learn. His confidence was infectious. He looked at them, and they looked at him, and the men pulled themselves together and determined to do their best. Their best surprised themselves. His patience was inexhaustible. His simplicity could not fail to be understood. His keenness and optimism carried all with them. Very soon the awkward squad found themselves awkward no longer; and soon after that they ceased to be a squad, and went back to the platoon.

Then he started to drill the platoon, with the sergeant standing by to point out his mistakes. Of course he made mistakes, and when that happened he never minded admitting it. He would explain what mistakes he had made, and try again. The result was that we began

to take almost as much interest and pride in his progress as he did in ours. We were his men, and he was our leader. We felt that he was a credit to us, and we resolved to be a credit to him. There was a bond of mutual confidence and affection between us, which grew stronger and stronger as the months passed. He had a smile for almost everyone; but we thought that he had a different smile for us. We looked for it, and were never disappointed. On parade, as long as we were trying, his smile encouraged us. Off parade, if we passed him and saluted, his eyes looked straight into our own, and his smile greeted us. It was a wonderful thing, that smile of his. It was something worth living for, and worth working for. It bucked one up when one was bored or tired. It seemed to make one look at things from a different point of view, a finer point of view, his point of view. There was nothing feeble or weak about

it. It was not monotonous like the smile of "Sunny Jim." It meant something. It meant that we were his men, and that he was proud of us, and sure that we were going to do jolly well—better than any of the other platoons. And it made us determine that we would. When we failed him, when he was disappointed in us, he did not smile. He did not rage or curse. He just looked disappointed, and that made us feel far more savage with ourselves than any amount of swearing would have done. He made us feel that we were not playing the game by him. It was not what he said. He was never very good at talking. It was just how he looked. And his look of displeasure and disappointment was a thing that we would do anything to avoid. The fact was that he had won his way into our affections. We loved him. And there isn't anything stronger than love, when all's said and done.

He was good to look on. He was big

and tall, and held himself upright. His eyes looked his own height. He moved with the grace of an athlete. His skin was tanned by a wholesome outdoor life, and his eyes were clear and wide open. Physically he was a prince among men. We used to notice, as we marched along the road and passed other officers, that they always looked pleased to see him. They greeted him with a cordiality which was reserved for him. Even the general seemed to have singled him out, and cast an eye of special approval upon him. Somehow, gentle though he was, he was never familiar. He had a kind of innate nobility which marked him out as above us. He was not democratic. He was rather the justification for aristocracy. We all knew instinctively that he was our superior—a man of finer temper than ourselves, a "toff" in his own right. I suppose that that was why he could be so humble without loss of dignity. For he

was humble too, if that is the right word, and I think it is. No trouble of ours was too small for him to attend to. When we started route marches, for instance, and our feet were blistered and sore, as they often were at first, you would have thought that they were his own feet from the trouble he took. Of course after the march there was always an inspection of feet. That is the routine. But with him it was no mere routine. He came into our rooms, and if anyone had a sore foot he would kneel down on the floor and look at it as carefully as if he had been a doctor. Then he would prescribe, and the remedies were ready at hand, being borne by the sergeant. If a blister had to be lanced he would very likely lance it himself there and then, so as to make sure that it was done with a clean needle and that no dirt was allowed to get in. There was no affectation about this, no striving after effect. It was simply that he felt that our feet were pretty im-

portant, and that he knew that we were pretty careless. So he thought it best at the start to see to the matter himself. Nevertheless, there was in our eyes something almost religious about this care for our feet. It seemed to have a touch of the Christ about it, and we loved and honored him the more.

We knew that we should lose him. For one thing, we knew that he would be promoted. It was our great hope that some day he would command the company. Also we knew that he would be killed. He was so amazingly unself-conscious. For that reason we knew that he would be absolutely fearless. He would be so keen on the job in hand, and so anxious for his men, that he would forget about his own danger. So it proved. He was a captain when we went out to the front. Whenever there was a tiresome job to be done, he was there in charge. If ever there were a moment of danger, he

was on the spot. If there were any particular part of the line where the shells were falling faster or the bombs dropping more thickly than in other parts, he was in it. It was not that he was conceited and imagined himself indispensable. It was just that he was so keen that the men should do their best, and act worthily of the regiment. He knew that fellows hated turning out at night for fatigue, when they were in a "rest camp." He knew how tiresome the long march there and back and the digging in the dark for an unknown purpose were. He knew that fellows would be inclined to grouse and shirk, so he thought that it was up to him to go and show them that he thought it was a job worth doing. And the fact that he was there put a new complexion on the matter altogether. No one would shirk if he were there. No one would grumble so much, either. What was good enough for him was good enough for us. If it

were not too much trouble for him to turn out, it was not too much trouble for us. He knew, too, how trying to the nerves it is to sit in a trench and be shelled. He knew what a temptation there is to move a bit farther down the trench and herd together in a bunch at what seems the safest end. He knew, too, the folly of it, and that it was not the thing to do—not done in the best regiments. So he went along to see that it did not happen, to see that the men stuck to their posts, and conquered their nerves. And as soon as we saw him, we forgot our own anxiety. It was: "Move a bit farther down, sir. We are all right here; but don't you go exposing of yourself." We didn't matter. We knew it then. We were just the rank and file, bound to take risks. The company would get along all right without us. But the captain, how was the company to get on without him? To see him was to catch his point of view, to forget our

personal anxieties, and only to think of the company, and the regiment, and honor.

There was not one of us but would gladly have died for him. We longed for the chance to show him that. We weren't heroes. We never dreamed about the V. C. But to save the captain we would have earned it ten times over, and never have cared a button whether we got it or not. We never got the chance, worse luck. It was all the other way. We were holding some trenches which were about as unhealthy as trenches could be. The Bosches were only a few yards away, and were well supplied with trench mortars. We hadn't got any at that time. Bombs and air torpedoes were dropping round us all day. Of course the captain was there. It seemed as if he could not keep away. A torpedo fell into the trench, and buried some of our chaps. The fellows next to them ran to dig them out. Of course he was one of the first. Then came

another torpedo in the same place. That was the end.

But he lives. Somehow he lives. And we who knew him do not forget. We feel his eyes on us. We still work for that wonderful smile of his. There are not many of the old lot left now; but I think that those who went West have seen him. When they got to the other side I think they were met. Someone said: "Well done, good and faithful servant." And as they knelt before that gracious pierced Figure, I reckon they saw nearby the captain's smile. Anyway, in that faith let me die, if death should come my way; and so, I think, shall I die content.

THE INDIGNITY OF LABOR

V

THE INDIGNITY OF LABOR

I once heard Mr. Ramsay MacDonald hold forth on the glories of the ideal socialistic state. In a spirit of exalted prophecy he told how in that state there would be no tyranny, no strife, no crime, no private property. Men would no longer work for sordid gain, but for the sheer joy of labor. "Do you believe that?" shouted a man in the audience. "Of course he does!" cried a little old man just in front of me. "Haven't I done it all my life?" But the majority of the audience were with the doubter. To them the idea of working for sheer joy was incomprehensible. They worked because they had to; because they would starve if they did not. If you

examine the speeches and writings of men more truly representative of labor than Mr. MacDonald you will find that this is their idea too. They have little to say of the dignity of labor, and much about its indignity. Their ideal is not the apotheosis of work, but its reduction and more even distribution. All men must share the burden, that all may taste the joy of relaxation. A minimum of work and a maximum of leisure, that is the ideal of the laborer.

This is a point of view which one can very easily understand; yet I venture to think that there is nothing inherently bad in labor—and by labor I mean manual labor. To a man who has suffered from an excess of leisure, and who knows the terrors of boredom, manual labor, performed under wholesome conditions, is a delight. I once went for six months to the Australian bush. To rise early, to spend the day in the open air wielding an axe, or to spend it at

the bottom of a forty-foot well with a bar and shovel, to come back in the evening hungry and thirsty and tired, was one of the best experiences that have ever come my way. I not only felt fit in body and wholesome in mind, I had a feeling of self-respect such as has never come from the manipulation of a typewriter. I felt that I had justified my manhood, and experienced the dignity of labor. Personally I feel convinced that labor is good, and that a working day of less than eight hours would be bad for the nation, and would only increase discontent.

If I am right we must seek the root of the indignity of labor, not in labor itself, but in the conditions under which it is performed. These conditions are, one must admit, often very bad. However much improvement there may have been in the last few years, hours are still often too long, the atmosphere tainted, and the relations between employers and employed,

and between the workers themselves, permeated with mutual suspicion and dislike. It is this last aspect of the problem that I want to discuss in the present article, because it is one which at first sight seems capable of improvement as a result of the war. At the present moment I suppose that nearly all employers of labor who are of military age and bodily fitness are holding commissions in the Army. Similarly nearly all their employees who are eligible are in the ranks of the Army. Yet in their new rôles as officer and private none of the old suspicion and dislike appears to survive. In the Army the relations between officers and men are, as a rule, excellent. Is it too much to hope that when the war is over, and both go back to their former positions, these good relations may in many cases survive?

I have no right to lay down the law about the relations of employers or employed. I belong to neither category. I

have no experience of the inner workings of an industrial concern. I have no idea of apportioning praise and blame. I only judge from what my friends—and I have friends among both classes—tell me. Often and often I have heard my employer friends denounce the workingman. They say that he has no sense of honor, no conception of the meaning of a contract, no gratitude, no loyalty. If an employer arranges to give his men, in addition to their wages, a share in the profits of the business, they will pocket their bonus without a "thank you" in the fat years, and in the lean years they will desert him without a thought. No matter how generously an employer treats his workmen, if there is a strike they will not be left out of it. It does not pay to treat men well. If there is any chance of shirking, defrauding, or doing shoddy work without being brought to book, the workman will take it. So say the employers. I

know nothing but what I am told. On the other hand, workmen always seem to suspect their employer of trying to get more out of them than he is paying for. If he can get work done for less than the standard wage, he will. If he can make one man do two men's work for one man's money, he will. If in a bumper year he makes big profits, the workers see nothing of them except what they earn by overtime. If a lean year follows, hands are dismissed ruthlessly without any regard to the length or fidelity of their service, or their chance of obtaining work elsewhere; and the whole business is reorganized with a view to extracting yet more work out of those whose services are retained. So say my workmen friends. Moreover, so far as I can judge, the relations between the workers themselves seem to be tainted with the same poison. They eye each other with suspicion, accuse each other on the slightest provocation with trying to curry

favor with the foreman or the "boss" at the expense of their mates, and of prejudicing the interests of the latter by accepting less than a fair wage, or by doing more than a fair day's work. It is only when the workmen are banded together in a defensive alliance against their masters, and the wages to be accepted and the amount of work to be done by each man strictly laid down, that there is even the appearance of cordiality between man and man; and even then the league is always on the lookout for treachery. I may be quite wrong, but such are my impressions of the spirit obtaining in industrial life. And if these impressions are correct, and if this atmosphere of mutual suspicion and mistrust does exist, it seems quite adequate to account for the workman's hatred of labor, and his denial of its inherent dignity.

In speaking of the Army I feel far more confident, for I have known it both as a private and N.C.O. and as an officer.

I have no hesitation in saying that in the vast majority of cases the relations between officers and men are quite extraordinarily good. In the average company or platoon the officer is proud of his men, and the men reciprocate the feeling. The men do their work cheerfully, and are content. Of course they grumble. Who doesn't? But there is no bitterness or mistrust. The men trust their officers and the officers trust their men, to an extent which I fancy has no parallel in civil life.

It is not easy to say why this should be so. The work of the soldier is not interesting. For the most part his training consists of long monotonous hours of drill and physical training, varied by spells of menial drudgery and hard, unskilled navvying. His pay, though not so little as it sounds, is considerably less than he would be likely to earn in civil life. The accommodation and food are of the roughest.

Although the work is healthy and there is no anxiety in the life, these facts do not in themselves account for the good spirit that prevails, for in cases where officers fail to gain the confidence of their men the men hate the life with a bitter loathing, and will take big risks to escape from it. I feel pretty sure that as a matter of fact the comparative contentment of most soldiers is mainly due to the persistence of a traditional good feeling between officers and men, just as with less confidence I believe that the discontent that seems to prevail in industrial life is due to the survival of a bad tradition.

When one comes to study the subject more deeply one is immediately struck by the fact that it is not easy-going laxity on the part of an officer that produces a spirit of contentment among the men. Rather the reverse is the case. It is more often the strict officer, who knows his work and sets a high standard, that is

the popular commander of a self-satisfied unit. Under a slack officer the men never know quite what is expected of them. One day on parade they will pass muster. On the next, for no greater slovenliness, they will be dropped on. Unconsciously their aim becomes, not to do their best, but to do the least that will save them from punishment. In such a unit as this there is no self-respect, no confidence. The men work unwillingly, despise and dislike their officer, and quarrel among themselves. On the other hand, where an officer is strict the men know exactly where they are. They know what is expected of them, and they know the results of negligence. They aim high, and the knowledge that they are doing so increases their self-respect and contentment. They are pleased with their officer and pleased with themselves. There is *ésprit de corps*. In such a unit you will find the nearest approach that I know to Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's ideal

of work well done for the sheer joy and pride of it.

Of course when I speak of a strict officer I do not mean a mere meticulous martinet. There are officers whose strictness amounts to positive hostility towards their men, and what a man sows that shall he reap. The sort of strictness that I mean is that of the officer who believes in himself and his men, and who for that reason will be content with nothing but the highest efficiency. Such an officer is never hostile to his men. Even when he is most severe it is only because he cannot bear that his men should do themselves less than justice. The men know it. They recognize that it is not his own credit that he is seeking, but their common glory. It is his company, but it is also theirs, of whose honor he is so jealous. Such officers are common in the British Army; in fact I think it would be true to say that the average officer sets a high

standard both for his men and for himself, and that he seldom fails to secure their loyal co-operation in attaining to it.

These are the facts, or what appear to me to be the facts. Now we come back to our question. Is there any chance that, when the war is over and officers become employers, and privates employed, these good relations between them will be reproduced in industrial life? I know what Mr. MacDonald would say. He would point out that in the Army there is no competition, only emulation; that officers are salaried officials of the State, and privates the employees of the State; that all work in the Army is done for the common weal, and that the scale of remuneration is fixed; that no man can be discharged (this is almost literally true now), and that all punishment is due to the law of the State. Reproduce these conditions in industrial life, and you have Socialism, and, according to Mr. MacDonald, the Utopian

era dawns. Regretfully I dissent. I doubt whether it would be possible to run the socialistic State on aristocratic lines, or to reproduce the "public school tradition," which whatever its limitations does place honor, discipline, and public spirit in the forefront of the virtues. Without this tradition I very much question whether it would be possible to eliminate corruption to anything like the same extent as has been done in the Army. Moreover, I very much question whether the average man would consent to give up his individuality permanently to the extent that he has done in this national crisis. In the dull times of peace his sense of the dramatic would fail him.

I fear that we must face the fact that when the war is over competition will continue to exert its ruthless pressure on employers, and through them on the employed. Labor will still have to combine against capital for self-defense. But

it is legitimate to hope that here and there a better spirit will prevail. Here and there an employer will have learnt a better way of handling men, and will be able to inspire them with respect and loyalty, and to make them feel that they are more than servants of the firm—rather partners, jointly responsible for its credit, and participating in its successes. And he will succeed where others before him have failed, because the workers, too, will have learnt a better day of work. They will have learnt that loyalty does not demean a man, and that not every olive branch need be mistrusted. And finally, in the firms where these good relations between master and men are realized, there will also be comradeship between man and man, such as we have known in the Army, and the indignity of labor shall have been done away with.

"THE COCKNEY WARRIOR"

VI

"THE COCKNEY WARRIOR"

When war broke out the public-school man applied for his commission in the firm conviction that war was a glorified form of big-game hunting—the highest form of sport. His whole training, the traditions of his kind, had prepared him for that hour. From his earliest school days he had been taught that it was the mark of a gentleman to welcome danger, and to regard the risk of death as the most piquant sauce to life. At school he had learnt, too, to sleep on a hard bed, to endure plenty of fresh air, and a cold bath on even the coldest mornings, and generally speaking to—

> Welcome each rebuff
> That turns earth's smoothness rough.

While in his holidays the joys of shooting and fishing, and perhaps even hunting, had accustomed him to the idea of taking life, so that if the odds were even, it would even be a recognized form of sport to hunt, and to be hunted by, his fellow man.

We who knew him had no doubt about the public-school boy; and when we read of his spirit, his courage, his smiling contempt of death, we told ourselves with pride that we knew it would be so with him. But with the Cockney it was different. When on all hands we heard praise of his bravery, his cheerfulness, his patience, his discipline, even we who knew him best were relieved, and very glad. For in every respect where the traditions of the public school make for soldierly qualities, the traditions of the East End seem to be against their formation. Tell a public-school boy a thrilling tale of adventure and the tradition dictates that he should say, "Oh, how jolly!" Tell the same

story to a boy in an East End club and convention demands that he shall say, "Ow, I'm glad I wern't there!" The Cockney is not brought up to see anything good in danger. He is brought up to fear it and avoid it. Nor is he taught to welcome hardship. For him and his kin life is so hard already that he naturally embraces any mitigation of its rigors. He sleeps on a feather bed if possible, with the tiny windows of the tiny room tight shut, and with his brothers nestling close to him for greater warmth. Even when he "changes" for football he generally only takes off his coat, and puts on his jersey over his waistcoat. Well might those who knew him mistrust his power to endure bravely the constant exposure to the elements inseparable from a campaign. Moreover, the Cockney is over-sensitive to pain. About hurt he is fearfully sentimental. He is a thoroughly kind-hearted little fellow, who not only doesn't want to hurt

anything, but doesn't want himself or anyone else to be hurt. True, the dangers of the boxing ring have an enormous attraction for him, but as a rule it is a fearful fascination far removed from the idea of emulation. In his quarrels with his mates he often boasts great things; but his anger nearly always evaporates in wordiness. He was, in fact, the last person in the world that we could imagine going out with set teeth to hurt and slay the enemies of his country. To all this we had to add that he was an intense lover of home. The sights, the sounds and smells of his native London are infinitely dear to him. Transplant him even to the glories of a Kentish spring, and in a fortnight he will begin to pine for home. Exile him to the Australian bush, and no matter how high the pay, or rosy the prospects, he will drift inevitably to Sydney or Melbourne, the nearest available imitation of his beloved London. And so we couldn't

help wondering how he would endure month after month of exile, subject to every discomfort and danger that he would be most likely to dread, and committed to the very sort of action from which he would be most likely to shrink.

Well, he surprised us all, as we have said, and has given to the world the amazing picture of a soldier who is infinitely brave without vindictiveness, terrible without hate, all-enduring and yet remaining his simple, kindly, jaunty self. For the Cockney warrior does not hate the Hun. Often and often you will hear him tell his mate that "the Bosches is just like us, they wants to get 'ome as much as we do; but they can't 'elp theirselves." At times he has regretful suspicions of the humanity of the Prussians and Bavarians; but they are not long-lived, and even while they endure he consoles himself with the proved good fellowship of the Saxon. Did not such and such a regiment walk out of

their trenches and talk to them as man to man? The Cockney reckons that when peace is declared both sides will run out of their trenches and shake hands, and be the best of pals. "They can't 'elp theirselves." This is the burden of the Cockney's philosophy of war—a phrase that seems like the echo of a statelier word of charity, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." Caught up from his civilian life by a wave of tremendous enthusiasm that completely overwhelmed his emotional nature, he found himself swimming in a mighty current, the plaything of forces he could neither understand nor control. But in splendid faith in the righteousness of those forces he is content to give up his will completely, and by swimming his best to do his bit to help them to attain their appointed end. In a dim way he feels the conflict of world forces, and is certain that he is on the side of Michael and the

Angels, and that the Kaiser is Lucifer and Antichrist.

The Cockney's sacrifice of his personality is for all practical purposes complete, and sublimely heroic. He only makes one reservation—the right so dear to all Englishmen—the right to grumble. To his tongue he allows full license, because he knows that in such liberty there is no real disloyalty because there is no efficacy. He curses the war, the Kaiser, the weather, the food, and everything indiscriminately, with relish and eloquence that is sometimes lacking in good taste. But let it pass. In view of his real heroism we cannot grudge him this one prized luxury.

THE RELIGION OF THE INARTICULATE

VII

THE RELIGION OF THE INARTICULATE

THERE has been a great deal of talk since the war began of "the Church's opportunity." It is one of those vague phrases which are the delight of the man who has no responsibility in the matter, and the despair of those who have. It suggests that "somebody ought to do something," and in this case the "somebody" darkly hinted at is obviously the unfortunate chaplain. I have seen letters from chaplains complaining bitterly of the phrase. What did it mean? Did it mean that there was an opportunity of providing soldiers with free notepaper and

cheap suppers? If so, they agreed. There was an opportunity, and the Church had risen to the occasion. But if it meant that there was an opportunity of bringing the erring back to the fold, they wished someone would come and show them how it ought to be done. They had tried their hardest, and it seemed to them that men were as inaccessible as ever. They admitted that they had hoped that the war would make men more serious, and that when confronted daily by the mysteries of death and pain they would naturally turn to the Church of their baptism for comfort and ghostly strength. But this had not happened to any marked extent. The men still appeared to be the same careless, indifferent heathen that they had always been.

To sit at a typewriter and tell a man how to do his job is a despicable proceeding, and yet I suppose that it is more or less what I am attempting in writing this

article. To avoid being offensive, it seems best to begin by explaining how I came to think that I ought to be able to shed some light on the subject.

It all began with a Quest. It is quite legitimate to call it a quest. It was the Romance of the Unknown that enticed us, just as it enticed necromancers and alchemists and explorers in former days. Only our Unknown was quite close to our hand. It looked up at us from the faces that we passed in the street. As we stood on the Embankment it frowned at us from across the river, from that black mass of factories and tenements and narrow, dismal streets that crowns the Thames' southern bank. The very air that we breathed was pungent with it. It was simply humanity that was our Unknown—the part of humanity which earns its daily bread hardly, which knows what it is to be cold and hungry and ill, and to have to go on working in spite of it. Just

as the Buddha left the sheltered life of his father's palace to become a vagabond in the quest of truth, so we, who had been guarded from hardship, and who were confused by the endless argument "about it and about," thought that we might gain a truer perspective by mingling with men whose minds had not been confused by artificial complications, and whose philosophy must have grown naturally from their naked struggle with the elemental realities. We thought that we could learn from them what were the truths which really mattered, what really was the relative value of the material, the mental, and the spiritual.

To cut a long story short, we went and lived in a mean street, opened clubs where we could meet the working man or boy, enticed him to our rooms and regaled him with buns and Egyptian cigarettes, and did our level best to understand his point of view. The venture was not a complete success. We did get some value out of

our experiences. We did sometimes see our vague ideals reappear as consummated heroism, while what had been termed pardonable weakness in a milder atmosphere was seen to be but an early stage of sheer bestiality. This was certainly stimulating. But all the time we had an uncomfortable feeling that we only knew a very small part of the lives and characters of the men whom we were studying. They came to our clubs and played games with us, until suddenly the more vital matter of sex took them elsewhere, and they were lost to us. They came to our rooms and talked football, but when we got on to philosophy they merely listened. I think that we mystified them a little, and ultimately bored them. We did not seem to get any real grip of them. We were always starting afresh with a new generation, and losing touch with the older one.

Then came the war, and for a moment

it seemed as if the quest would have to be abandoned. The men enlisted, and our clubs became empty. Several of the followers of the quest felt the imperious summons of a stronger call, and applied for their commissions. Suddenly to one or two of us came an inspiration. The war was not the end, but the beginning. We had failed because we had not gone deep enough. We had only touched the surface. To understand the workingman one must know him through and through —live, work, drink, sleep with him. And the war gave us a unique opportunity of doing this. We knew that we could never become workingmen; but no power on earth could prevent us from enlisting if we were sound of wind and limb. And enlisting meant living on terms of absolute equality with the very men whom we wanted to understand. Filled anew with the glamour of our quest, we sought the nearest recruiting office.

In the barrack-room we certainly achieved intimacy; but the elemental realities were distinctly disappointing. We were disappointed to find that being cold and rather hungry did not conduce to sound philosophizing. It was merely uncomfortable. Cleaning greasy cooking-pots, scrubbing floors, and drilling produced no thrills. They simply bored us. Life was dull and prosaic, and, as we have said, uncomfortable. No one ever said anything interesting. We never got a chance to sit down and think things out. Praying was almost an impossibility. It is extraordinarily hard to pray in a crowd, especially when you are tired out at night, and have to be up and dressed in the morning before you are properly awake.

These were first impressions; but as time went on, and life became easier through habit, we were able to realize that we had actually been experiencing the very conditions which prevent the

workingman from being a philosopher. We grasped the fundamental fact that he is inarticulate, and that he has no real chance of being anything else. We perceived that if you wanted to find out what he believed in you must not look to his words, but to his actions and the objects of his admiration. And, after all, it did not necessarily follow that because a man was inarticulate he therefore had no religion. St. James compares those who state their faith apart from their works with those who declare it by their works, and his comparison is by no means favorable to the former. Actions and objects of admiration, these were the things that we must watch if we would discover the true religion of the inarticulate.

I have said that the life of the barrack-room is dull and rather petty. In point of fact, it bears somewhat the same relation to ordinary working-class life as salt-water baths do to the sea. We used to read

that Brill's Baths were "salt as the sea but safer." Well, barrack life is narrow and rather sordid, like the life of all workingmen, and it lacks the spice of risk. There is no risk of losing your job and starving. Your bread-and-margarine are safe whatever happens. As a result the more heroic qualities are not called into action. The virtues of the barrack-room are unselfishness in small things, and its vices are meanness and selfishness in small things. A few of the men were frankly bestial, obsessed by two ideas—beer and women. But for the most part they were good fellows. They were intensely loyal to their comrades, very ready to share whatever they had with a chum, extraordinarily generous and chivalrous if anyone was in trouble, and that quite apart from his deserts. At any rate, it was easy to see that they believed whole-heartedly in unselfishness and in charity to the unfortunate, even if they did not always live up to their

beliefs. It was the same sort of quality, too, that they admired in other people. They liked an officer who was free with his money, took trouble to understand them if they were in difficulties, and considered their welfare. They were extremely quick to see through anyone who pretended to be better than he was. This they disliked more than anything else. The man they admired most was the man who, though obviously a gentleman, did not trade on it. That, surely, is the trait which in the Gospel is called humility. They certainly did believe in unselfishness, generosity, charity, and humility. But it was doubtful whether they ever connected these qualities with the profession and practice of Christianity.

It was when we had got out to Flanders, and were on the eve of our first visit to the trenches, that I heard the first definite attempt to discuss religion, and then it was only two or three who took part.

The remainder just listened. It was bed-time, and we were all lying close together on the floor of a hut. We were to go into the trenches for the first time the next day. I think that everyone was feeling a little awed. Unfortunately we had just been to an open-air service, where the chaplain had made desperate efforts to frighten us. The result was just what might have been expected. We were all rather indignant. We might be a little bit frightened inside; but we were not going to admit it. Above all, we were not going to turn religious at the last minute because we were afraid. So one man began to scoff at the Old Testament, David and Bathsheba, Jonah and the whale, and so forth. Another capped him by laughing at the feeding of the five thousand. A third said that in his opinion anyone who pretended to be a Christian in the Army must be a humbug. The sergeant-major was fatuously apologetic

and shocked, and applied the closure by putting out the light and ordering silence.

It was not much, but enough to convince me that the soldier, and in this case the soldier means the workingman, does not in the least connect the things that he really believes in with Christianity. He thinks that Christianity consists in believing the Bible and setting up to be better than your neighbors. By believing the Bible he means believing that Jonah was swallowed by the whale. By setting up to be better than your neighbors he means not drinking, not swearing, and preferably not smoking, being close-fisted with your money, avoiding the companionship of doubtful characters, and refusing to acknowledge that such have any claim upon you.

This is surely nothing short of tragedy. Here were men who believed absolutely in the Christian virtues of unselfishness, generosity, charity, and humility, without

ever connecting them in their minds with Christ; and at the same time what they did associate with Christianity was just on a par with the formalism and smug self-righteousness which Christ spent His whole life in trying to destroy.

The chaplains as a rule failed to realize this. They saw the inarticulateness, and assumed a lack of any religion. They remonstrated with their hearers for not saying their prayers, and not coming to Communion, and not being afraid to die without making their peace with God. They did not grasp that the men really had deep-seated beliefs in goodness, and that the only reason why they did not pray and go to Communion was that they never connected the goodness in which they believed with the God in Whom the chaplains said they ought to believe. If they had connected Christianity with unselfishness and the rest, they would have been prepared to look at Christ as their

Master and their Saviour. As a matter of fact, I believe that in a vague way lots of men do regard Christ as on their side. They have a dim sort of idea that He is misrepresented by Christianity, and that when it comes to the test He will not judge them so hardly as the chaplains do. They have heard that He was the Friend of sinners, and severe on those who set up to be religious. But however that may be, I am certain that if the chaplain wants to be understood and to win their sympathy he must begin by showing them that Christianity is the explanation and the justification and the triumph of all that they do now really believe in. He must start by making their religion articulate in a way which they will recognize. He must make them see that his creeds and prayers and worship are the symbols of all that they admire most, and most want to be.

In doing this perhaps he will find a

stronger faith his own. It is certainly arguable that we educated Christians are in our way almost as inarticulate as the uneducated whom we always want to instruct. If we apply this test of actions and objects of admiration to our own beliefs, we shall often find that our professed creeds have very little bearing on them. In the hour of danger and wounds and death many a man has realized with a shock that the articles of his creed about which he was most contentious mattered very, very little, and that he had somewhat overlooked the articles that proved to be vital. If the workingman's religion is often wholly inarticulate, the real religion of the educated man is often quite wrongly articulated.

OF SOME WHO WERE LOST, AND AFTERWARD WERE FOUND

VIII

OF SOME WHO WERE LOST, AND AFTERWARD WERE FOUND

I SOMETIMES wonder whether our Lord is altogether pleased at the sense in which we use that phrase of His—"lost sheep." Disciples who have "found salvation" so often say "lost" when they mean "damned," and "sheep" when they mean "goats." Ask the average Christian to differentiate between "damnation" and "perdition," and ten to one he will tell you that the words are synonymous; and yet if derivations count for anything "damnation" means a state of being condemned, and "perdition" means a state of being lost. Are these words synonymous? Personally I doubt it. For myself I am unable

to believe that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ condemns anyone simply because he has lost his way. After all, so often it is not his fault if he has.

One can't help being sorry for people who have lost themselves. I am sure that the Good Shepherd is sorry for the lost sheep. Did He not go and seek them with much pain and labor? But if there are any damned souls I doubt if one could pity them. I fancy that they would prove to be so loathsome, so poisonous, so unclean, so utterly corrupt, that even the great Physician of souls diseased Himself could do nothing for them, and that one could only feel relief at seeing them burnt up in the unquenchable fire. And by the way, surely they are destroyed. The idea of imperishable beastliness writhing for ever in unquenchable fire were enough to disturb the serenity of an archangel. Surely it is more biblical (not to mention common sense) to suppose that

fire is an instrument of purification and destruction rather than of torture. Gehenna in the neighborhood of Jerusalem was, if I mistake not, a place where garbage was destroyed by fire, and surely if there is a Gehenna for the New Jerusalem we may conclude that its function is similar. But all this is a digression. In this article we would speak of some who were lost, and afterward were found.

They were lost; but not necessarily damned. They were lost; but they were not poisonous. That was the trouble. They were so lovable. We could not help loving them, however little we felt that they deserved it. They gave us endless trouble. They would not fit into any respectable niche in our social edifice. They were incurably disreputable, always in scrapes, always impecunious, always improvident. When they were out of sight we hardened our hearts and said that we had done with them; but all the time we knew that

when it came to the point we should forgive them. They were such good fellows, the rascals! If they did fly in the face of the conventions, well, we sometimes felt that the conventions deserved it. It is not good for anybody or anything to be always taken seriously, whether an archbishop or a convention. If they offended us one day, we forgave them the next for the way in which they shocked uncle Adolphus. They were extravagant and ran up debts. It was most reprehensible. Yet somehow even their creditors could never impute intention to defraud. And their very recklessness in spending what they had not got seemed in a way but the balance against our careful reluctance to spend what we had got. They were drunken and loose in morals, so we heard. Yet we could never believe that they deliberately harmed anyone. Even in their amours there was always a touch of romance, and never

the taint of sheer bestiality. They had their code, and though God forbid that it should ever be ours, it did somehow seem to be a natural set-off to the somewhat sordidly prudent morality of the marriage market.

They were perplexing. We could not but condemn them. Indeed they condemned themselves with the utmost good-humor. Yet we could never altogether feel that we should like them to be exactly as we were. Their humility disarmed our self-satisfied judgments. They had the elusive charm of youth, irresponsibility, and vagabondage. We could not fit them in, and somehow we felt that this inability of ours was a slur on society. We felt that there ought to be a place for them in the scheme of things. It made us angry when they cast their pearls before swine; yet somehow there didn't seem to be anywhere else for them to throw them. We had a feeling that they ought

to have been able to lay their pearls at the feet of the great Pearl Merchant, and yet His Church seemed to have no use for them, and that we felt was a slur on the Church. As we read the Gospel story we thought that there must have been men very like them among the "lost sheep" whom the Lord Jesus came to seek. Some of those Publicans and sinners with whom the Lord feasted, to the great scandal of the worthy Pharisees, must have been very like these wayward vagabonds of ours. That woman taken in adultery, and that other harlot, they had their pearls and alabaster cruse of ointment very precious. They had not known what to do with them. Society in those days had found no legitimate use for their gifts. They were lost, sure enough. And then came the Lord, and they were found. The swine no longer got their pearls. They were bought by the great Pearl Merchant, and full value given. And be

sure that those women had their male counterparts in the crowd of sinners who followed the Lord, and resolved to sin no more.

Once more the Lord has walked our streets. Once more He has called to the lost sheep to follow the Good Shepherd along the thorny path of suffering and death. As of old He has demanded of them their all. And as of old He has not called in vain. Whatever their faults these beloved lost sheep do not lack courage. When they give they give recklessly, not staying to count the cost. They never bargain, estimate the odds, calculate profit and loss. With them it is a plunge, a blind headlong plunge. They venture "neck or nothing; Heaven's success found, or earth's failure." When the call came to face hardship and risk life itself in the cause of freedom, we stolid respectable folk paused. We waited to be convinced of the necessity. We cal-

culated the loss and gain. We sounded our employers about the keeping open of our job. Not so they. They plunged headlong. It was their chance. For this, they felt, they had been born. Their hearts were afire. They had a craving to give their lives for the great cause. They had a hunger for danger. And what a nuisance they were in that first weary year of training!

They plunged headlong down the stony path of glory; but in their haste they stumbled over every stone! And when they did that they put us all out of our stride, so crowded was the path. Were they promoted? They promptly celebrated the fact in a fashion that secured their immediate reduction. Were they reduced to the ranks? Then they were in hot water from early morn to dewy eve, and such was their irrepressible charm that hot water lost its terrors. To be a defaulter in such merry company was a privilege

rather than a disgrace. So in despair we promoted them again, hoping that by giving them a little responsibility we should enlist them on the side of good order and discipline. Vain hope! There are things that cannot be overlooked, even in a Kitchener battalion.

Then at last we "got out." We were confronted with dearth, danger, and death. And then they came to their own. We could no longer compete with them. We stolid respectable folk were not in our element. We knew it. We felt it. We were determined to go through with it. We succeeded; but it was not without much internal wrestling, much self-conscious effort. Yet they, who had formerly been our despair, were now our glory. Their spirits effervesced. Their wit sparkled. Hunger and thirst could not depress them. Rain could not damp them. Cold could not chill them. Every hardship became a joke. They did not endure hardship, they derided it. And somehow it seemed at

the moment as if derision was all that hardship existed for! Never was such a triumph of spirit over matter. As for death, it was, in a way, the greatest joke of all. In a way, for if it was another fellow that was hit it was an occasion for tenderness and grief. But if one of them was hit, O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory? Portentous, solemn Death, you looked a fool when you tackled one of them! Life? They did not value life! They had never been able to make much of a fist of it. But if they lived amiss they died gloriously, with a smile for the pain and the dread of it. What else had they been born for? It was their chance. With a gay heart they gave their greatest gift, and with a smile to think that after all they had anything to give which was of value. One by one Death challenged them. One by one they smiled in his grim visage, and refused to be dismayed. They had been lost,

but they had found the path that led them home; and when at last they laid their lives at the feet of the Good Shepherd, what could they do but smile?

AN ENGLISHMAN PHILOSOPHIZES

IX

AN ENGLISHMAN PHILOSOPHIZES

Of course one cannot mention his name. He always disliked publicity. It was a source of pride with him that his name had never appeared in the papers. Unless it appears in the "Roll of Honor," it probably never will. Let us call him "the Average Englishman." It is what he used to aim at being, and if such a being can be said to exist, surely he was it.

As regards philosophizing—well, he simply didn't. He had not read philosophy at a University, and he never would think things out. He disapproved of men in his position attempting anything of the sort. He considered it a waste of time

and rather unwholesome. To talk about one's innermost convictions he regarded as indecent. The young curate from Oxford, who talks best about God after a bottle of champagne, shocked him badly. He said that it was blasphemous. His own point of view was a modest one. Where the learned differed so widely, he argued, it was hardly likely that his inadequate mental equipment would help him to a sound conclusion. The nearest approach to a philosophy that he possessed was wholly practical, empirical, even opportunist. It was not a philosophy at all, but a code of honor and morals, based partly on tradition and partly on his own shrewd observation of the law of cause and effect as illustrated in the lives of his neighbors. As a philosophy it remained unformulated. He refused even to discuss its philosophical and theological implications. In fact, his was "the religion of all sensible men," and "sensible men don't tell" what that is.

It suited him to be outwardly orthodox. His mother liked him to take her to church on Sunday. To see him doing so increased the confidence of his professional *clientèle*. Also, the vicar was a friend of his, and played a capital game of golf. So he was orthodox; but abstract truth was not his job. He left that to the parsons and professors.

That this was the standpoint which he adopted is not altogether surprising. It worked. It enabled him to meet quite adequately all the mild exigencies of his uneventful life and unexciting personality. For his life was dull and his personality far too habitually restrained to offer any sensations. If hidden fires had ever burned beneath his somewhat conventional exterior, they had received no encouragement, and had soon died out for want of air.

Suddenly, quite unexpectedly, he found himself lifted out of his office chair, and after a short interval deposited "some-

where in France." Here he found himself leading a ridiculously uncivilized and uncomfortable life, and standing in constant danger of being blown to pieces. Naturally the transition was a little bewildering. Outwardly he remained calm; but below the surface strange things were happening —nothing less than a complete readjustment of his mental perspective. Somehow his code, hitherto so satisfactory, failed to suffice for the new situation in which he found himself. The vaguely good-natured selfishness which had earned for him the title of "good fellow" in the quiet days of peace did not quite fit in with the new demands made on his personality. Much against his will, he had to try to think things out.

It was an unmitigated nuisance. His equipment was so poor. He had read so little that was of any use to him. All that he could remember were some phrases from the Bible, some verses from Omar

Khayyám, and a sentence or two from the Latin Syntax. And then his brain was so unaccustomed to this sort of effort. It made him quite tired; but it had to be done. A man couldn't sit in a trench hour after hour and day after day with shells whizzing through the air over his head, or bursting thunderously ten yards from him, without trying to get some grip of his mental attitude towards them. He could not see his comrades killed and maimed and mutilated without in some way defining his views on life and death and duty and fate. He could not shoot and bayonet his fellow men without trying to formulate some justification for such an unprecedented course of action. His mind was compelled to react to the new and extraordinary situations with which it was confronted. And, oddly enough, in the course of these successive reactions he passed, without knowing it, very close to the path trodden before him

by some of the greatest teachers of the world.

To begin with, it came as something of a shock to discover that the *Rubáiyát*, hitherto his most fruitful source of quotations, was quite useless to him. It was futile to talk about the cup when one had nothing to put in it, and as for refusing to take life seriously—well, Omar lived before the days of high explosives. The Latin Syntax was a little better. It at any rate provided him with *Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*, but even that seemed to be framed more for the comfort of his sorrowing relatives in the event of his "stopping a bullet" than for himself. As for the Bible—well, there were some jolly things in that, but he was rather shy about the Bible. It didn't seem quite playing the game to go to it now when he had neglected it so long; besides, these higher critics—well, he hadn't gone into the matter, but he had a pretty shrewd idea

that the Bible was a bit discredited. No, he would just go by facts and their effect on himself, and do his best out of his own head.

One afternoon he was in a support trench, and the Germans had got the direction pretty right, and were enfilading it at a long range with their heavy guns. The shells began by dropping at the far end of the trench, which they blew to pieces most successfully. They then began to creep up in his direction, the range lengthening about twenty-five yards after each half-dozen shells. Would they reach him? Would he be at the end or in the middle of this beastly interval of twenty-five yards? In short, would the shells drop on top of him or about ten yards short or ten yards over? It was an agonizing half-hour, and in the course of it he very nearly became a Mohammedan. He didn't call it that. But he tried to read a comic paper, and told himself that it was simply

a question of fate. "I can't do anything about it," he said to himself. "If the damned thing drops, it drops; I can't stop it by worrying." Fate, that was the solution. "Kismet!" he repeated to himself, thinking, in a moment of inspiration, of Oscar Asche. As a matter of fact, the enfilade was not perfect, and as the shells crept up the exact direction was lost, and they burst harmlessly about fifteen yards behind the trench instead of in it. The Average Englishman murmured. "Praise be to Allah!" and relit his pipe, which had gone out.

Then a day or two later his company was moved up to the firing trench. Somehow the "Kismet" formula did not seem so effective there. The Germans were only about twenty-five yards away, the barbed wire had been badly knocked about, and the beasts had an unpleasant habit of creeping up at night through the long grass and throwing bombs into the

trench. It was no longer a question of sitting tight and waiting; one had to watch very carefully, and the element of retaliation came in, too. He found himself sitting up half the night with a pile of bombs on the sandbags in front of him, watching the grass with straining eyes. It was nervous work. He had never thrown a bomb. Of course it was quite simple. You just pulled a pin out, counted four, and let fly. But supposing you dropped the beastly thing! Though it was a cold night, he sweated at the thought. Self-confidence was what he wanted now—self-confidence and the will to conquer. Where that last phrase came from he was not sure. He luckily did not realize how near he was to becoming a disciple of the Hunnish Nietzsche! "The will to prevail," that was the phrase which pleased him; and he thought to himself that it would suit a charge, too, if one came his way.

But the next morning it rained. The trench being a brand-new one, there were no dug-outs, and he had to stand in water and get wet. It was horrible. "Kismet" irritated him; "the will to prevail" did not help. Yet it was no use grousing. It only made matters worse for himself and the other fellows. Then he remembered a phrase from a boys' club in poorer London; "Keep smiling" was the legend written over the door, and he remembered that the motto on the club button was "Fratres." By God, those kids had a pretty thin time of it! But yet, somehow, when all the "Fratres" had made a determined effort to keep smiling, the result was rather wonderful. Yes, "Keep smiling" was the best motto he could find for a wet day, and he tried hard to live up to it.

At last the battalion went into reserve, and was unutterably bored for a week. By night they acted as ration carriers, and

improved communication trenches. By day they endured endless inspections, slept a little, and grumbled much. Our Average Englishman tried hard to keep smiling, but failed miserably. This made him wonder whether, on his return to the trenches, his other formulæ would also fail him. But on the day before they went back into support one of the corporals fell sick, and much to his surprise he was hurriedly given one stripe and put in command of a section.

This promotion pleased him. He took the responsibility with extreme seriousness, and became quite fatherly in his attitude towards his "command." This was all the easier because that particular section had lost heavily during the preceding spell in the trenches, and its ranks had been largely made up from the members of a draft fresh from home.

We do not propose to describe his experiences minutely. Much the same thing

happened as happened before. They were shelled while in support, and he walked up and down his section encouraging them and calming them down. In the firing trench the same bombs were in readiness, and he spent most of the night with the sentry to give him confidence. A bomb from a trench mortar actually fell into his part of the trench, killing one lad and wounding two more, and for the moment his hands were full steadying the others, applying field dressings to the wounded, and seeing to their removal from the trench.

At length the battalion was relieved, and marched back to a rest camp, where it spent three weeks of comparative peace. In the intervals of presenting arms and acting as orderly corporal the Average Englishman thought over his experiences, and it suddenly struck him that during his fortnight as a section commander he had actually forgotten to be afraid, or even nervous! It was really astounding.

Moreover, his mind rose to the occasion, and pointed out the reason. He had been so anxious for his section that he had never once thought of himself! With a feeling of utter astonishment, he realized that he had stumbled upon the very roots of courage —unselfishness. He, the Average Englishman, had made an epoch-making philosophical discovery!

Of course he did not know that the Buddha had discovered this great truth some thousands of years before him. Still less did he guess that the solution of all these problems with which war had confronted him was contained in the religion in which he was supposed to have been educated: that trust in the all-knowing Father was Christ's loftier substitute for submission to fate; that faith was the higher form of self-confidence; and that the love that Christ taught was the Buddha's selflessness without the incubus of his artificial philosophy. Nevertheless, he

had made great strides, and war has still fresh experiences in store for him, and no doubt experience will continue to instruct. And after all, how seldom does a "Christian education" teach one anything worth knowing about Christianity!

AN ENGLISHMAN PRAYS

X

AN ENGLISHMAN PRAYS

In civil life he had always said his prayers. They had done him good, too, in a way. They had been a sort of squaring of his accounts morally. He had tried to see where he had failed, made resolutions to amend, and acknowledged to himself at any rate, that he had failed. He had remembered his relations and friends before God, and it had helped him to do his duty by them. At the same time, he was not in the least degree a mystic. Even in his prayers he had never felt the reality of God. "God" to him was rather the name for the principle of goodness than a Being of infinite power and intimate importance. His greatest religious "experi-

ence" had been a spasmodic loyalty to the Christ-man, stimulating him at rare intervals to sudden acts of quixotism.

When he first enlisted he continued the habit of saying his prayers, more because it was inconvenient than for any other reason, perhaps. The other fellows in the barrack-room did not say their prayers, and he was too English not to feel the more resolved to say his. He was not going to be afraid. So he said them, deliberately and very self-consciously, half expecting to be laughed at. It was very difficult. He could not concentrate his mind. He whispered the words mechanically, his head full of other thoughts. The other fellows paused in their talk the first night, and then went on as if nothing had happened. After that no notice was taken at all. No one followed his example. No one commented, or interfered with him. A little persecution would have hardened his resolve. Being ignored weak-

ened it. He could not bring his mind to bear on his words, and there seemed to be no point in going on. He tried saying them in bed, in the privacy of his blanket. Then one day he forgot; and after that he just omitted to say them ever.

After all it made very little difference. And yet at times he felt that there was a difference. It was a little like a man sitting in a room with a frosted window that only opened at the top. He understood that it gave on to a garden, but he had never seen the garden. He used to sit with the top of the window pulled open, and then somehow one day he forgot to open it, and after that he never bothered. It made so little difference. At times he did notice that the air was a little less fresh, but he was too lazy, or too busy about other matters to bother.

This Englishman's religion had always been a bit like that, like a window opening on to the unknown and unexplored. He

liked to think that his window gave on to a garden, and to think that he sometimes caught the scent of the flowers. But he had never had the energy or the faith to test his belief. Suppose he were to find that after all his garden was only a paved yard! Anyhow he had left the window shut now. At times he regretted it; but a kind of inertia possessed him, and he did not do anything about it.

When he first got to the front he prayed, half ashamed. He was not quite sure of himself, and he prayed that he might not be found wanting. But when it came to the point everything was very prosaic. It was boring, and uncomfortable, and at times terrifying. Yet he felt no inclination to shirk. He just drifted on, doing his bit like the others, and with not too good a grace. He was asked to take the stripe, and refused. It meant more trouble and responsibility. His conscience told him that he was shirking. He grew angry

with it. "Well," he demanded of it, "why have I responsibilities more than anyone else? Haven't I failed?" He put the question defiantly, ostensibly to his conscience, but with an eye to the "Christ-man" in Whom he had almost ceased to believe. To his astonishment he got an answer. It was a contingency with which he had not reckoned. Like a flash this sentence wrote itself across his mind—"Strengthen My brethren." It staggered him. He felt that he knew what it meant. "Don't whine about failure. If you are willing to serve, here is your job, and the sign of your forgiveness—Strengthen My brethren." He took the stripe after all, and fathered the boys of his section.

The final stage came later. There had been a charge, a hopeless affair from the start, undertaken in broad daylight. He had fallen between the lines, and had seen the battered remnant of his company

retire past him to their own trench before a hail of bullets. He lay in the long grass between the lines, unable to move, and with an unceasing throbbing pain in his left leg and arm. A whizz-bang had caught him in both places. All the afternoon he lay still, his mind obsessed by one thought—Would anyone find him when it was dark, or would he be left to die? He kept on wondering the same thing, with the same maddening persistence. At last he must have lost consciousness, for he woke to find that the sun had set, and all was still but for an occasional flare or a random shot. He had lost a lot of blood; but the throbbing had ceased, and if he kept still he felt no pain. He just lay there, feeling strangely peaceful. Above him he could see the stars, and the moon, though low in the heavens, gave a clear light.

He found himself vaguely wondering about the meaning of everything. The

stars seemed to make it all seem so small and petty. All this bloodshed—what was the good of it? It was all so ephemeral, so trivial, so meaningless in the presence of eternity and infinity. It was just a strife of pygmies. He suddenly felt terribly small and lonely, and he was so very, very weak. He was cut off from his fellow men as surely as if he had been on a desert island, and he felt somehow as if he had got out of his element, and was launched, a tiny pygmy soul, on the sea of immensity, where he could find no bearings. Eternity and infinity were so pitiless and uncomprehending. The stars gazed at him imperturbably. There was no sympathy there but only cold, unseeing tolerance. Yet after all, he had the advantage of them. For all his pygmy ineffectiveness he was of finer stuff than they. At least he could feel—suffer. He had only to try to move to verify that. At least he was aware of his own existence, and could even gauge

his own insignificance. There was that in him which was not in them, unless—unless it was in everything. "God!" he whispered softly. "God everywhere!" Then into his tired brain came a new phrase—"Underneath are the everlasting arms." He sighed contentedly, as a tired child, and the phrase went on repeating itself in his brain in a kind of chant—"Underneath are the everlasting arms."

The moon went down behind the horizon, and it was dark. They fetched him in at last. He will never again be sound of limb; but there is in his memory and in his heart that which may make him a staunch fighter in other fields. He has learnt a new way of prayer, and the courage that is born of faith well-founded.

THE ARMY AND THE UNIVERSITIES: A STUDY OF EDUCATIONAL VALUES

XI

THE ARMY AND THE UNIVERSITIES: A STUDY OF EDUCATIONAL VALUES

An undergraduate once received a simultaneous visit from a subaltern and a High Church Socialist curate. Unfortunately he was unable to entertain them in the afternoon, so he sent them out together in a canoe on the "Char." The canoe returned in safety. As soon as he had a chance, the host asked the curate privately how he liked the subaltern. "Oh," said the curate, "a very nice chap; but awfully young, and knows very little about life." A little later the host asked the subaltern how he got on with the curate. "Quite a decent little man," said the

subaltern; "but it would do him a lot of good to mix more in society and broaden his views; and, of course, he is very young!" Probably they were both right. Both were good fellows; but they had looked at life from an utterly different angle, and their views on what they saw were diametrically opposite. Neither was old enough to be very tolerant, and so it is rather a wonder that the canoe did return in safety.

Of course the curate was a University man, and the subaltern had been at "the Shop" or Sandhurst, and the implication is that each was typical of his schooling. That is as unfair as most generalizations. All University men are not Socialist curates, and all soldiers are not Tories; but at the same time the lack of sympathy between these two individuals is paralleled in most cases where representatives of the two types meet. In some outlandish Colony you will sometimes find a soldier and a University man collaborating in

the government of a district. If you ask the soldier how he likes his assistant, he will probably answer: "A damned good chap when you know him"; and then he will add, with a somewhat rueful smile: "but, by Jove, that Oxford manner of his took a bit of getting over at the start!" If you ask the University man how he gets on with his chief, he will answer: "A 1 *now;* but, by gad, his manner was a bit sticky at first!" You will also find the same state of affairs in many battalions of the New Army. The fact is that the University, or Sandhurst, or "the Shop" receives a boy at his most plastic age, and sets its mark on him indelibly; and the mark of each is wholly different. Two boys may come from the same public school and the same home; but if one goes to Oxford and the other to Woolwich, they will be utterly different men. As one who has been to both, I think I understand just why it is.

It is twelve years since I was at "the Shop"; but from all I hear and see the place has not altered so very much. It was run on Spartan lines. The motto was, and is, "Unhasting yet unresting work," and the curriculum was almost exclusively utilitarian. The chief subjects were mathematics, gunnery, fortification, mechanics, electricity, physical training, riding, and drill. None of these is calculated to widen the sympathies or cultivate the imagination. They are calculated to produce competent gunners and sappers. Our day was fully occupied, and in the two hours of leisure between dinner and lights out, one had no inclination to embark on fresh subjects of study. The discipline was strict, and ethically the value of the life was that it inculcated the ideas of alertness, duty, and honor. To do one's job thoroughly and quickly, and to be quite straightforward about it if one had omitted any duty, was the code

to which we were expected to conform. Religion was represented by a parade-service on Sundays. In so far as it meant anything, it was the recognition that God was King of kings, and, as such, deserved His weekly meed of homage. Here is a story which illustrates rather well the military view of religion. A certain devout major had promised to attend a prayer meeting, and on that account refused an invitation to dine with a member of the Army Council. When someone expressed astonishment at his refusal, he replied shortly that he had an engagement with the Lord God, Who was senior to the member of the Army Council! If there was little opportunity for the study of the "humanities," and little inducement to mysticism in religion, there was no encouragement at all to the development of the æsthetic faculties. Our rooms were hopelessly bare and hideous. My first room I shared with three others. The

walls were of whitewashed brick. The floor was bare. The beds folded up against the wall, under print curtains of an uncompromising pattern. The furniture consisted of a deal table, four Windsor chairs, a shelf with four basins, and a locker divided into four compartments and painted khaki. One could do nothing with such a room. It crushed individuality of taste most effectually. Finally, one learnt not to show physical fear or nervousness. The plank bridge across the roof of the "gym." ensured an appearance of courage, while the "snookers' concert," where one had to sing a song in front of a hall full of yelling seniors, was the cure for a display of nerves.

The result of such a schooling is distinctive. The average officer is a man with a good deal of simplicity. His code is simple. He sees life as a series of incidents with which he has to deal practically. It is not his job to ask why. He has to

get on and do something about it. If he does his work well, that is all that is required of him. His interests are practical. They relate to his profession, his men, and his recreations. His pleasures are simple. They are the pleasures of the body rather than the mind—sport, games, sex. His relations with his fellow men are simple and defined. To his superiors in rank he must be respectful, at all events outwardly. He must support them even when he thinks they are mistaken. To his equals he must be a good comrade. To his men he must be a sort of father, encouraging, correcting, stimulating, restraining, as the occasion demands. They are quite definitely his inferiors. It is not surprising if he lacks sympathy with Socialism, Idealism, Mysticism, and all the other "isms." Like everyone else, he has the limitations of his virtues.

The life at Oxford, which I experienced some four years later, was the most com-

plete contrast imaginable to what I have been trying to describe, and, as is only natural, the product is absolutely different from the product of "the Shop." At Oxford we were the masters of our time. We read what we liked and when we liked. We went to bed when we liked, and, in the main, got up when we liked. We had beautiful rooms, which offered every inducement to the exercise of individual taste. Our reading was the reverse of utilitarian; it was calculated not to make us competent craftsmen, but to widen our sympathies and stimulate our imaginations. We read history, philosophy, theology, literature, psychology—all subjects which incite one to dream rather than to act. Our religion tended to be mystical. In creed and ethics we were inclined to be critical, to take nothing for granted. In politics our sympathies were too wide and our skepticism too pronounced to be compatible with definite views. Socially we were theoretically demo-

cratic; but our inherited and æsthetic prejudices kept most of us from putting our theories into practice. When we left our *Alma Mater* we were full of vague ideals, unpractical dreams, and ineffective good-will. Those of us who then went to work took little practical enthusiasm with them at the first; and it was many months before they were able to relegate to its proper place in the dim background the land of dreams which was their kingdom of the mind.

All stories end in the same way now: "then came the war." Most University men took commissions, and found themselves working side by side with their opposites—the men from Sandhurst and Woolwich. In the end both types found that they had something to learn from the other. In the routine of the barrack and the trench the University man learnt the value of punctuality and a high sense of duty. He found it very hard to work

when he felt inclined to meditate, to perform punctiliously duties of which he did not see the necessity but only the inconvenience. Yet time showed that the military code was not simply arbitrary and irritating, as it appeared at first, but essential to efficiency. So, too, the professional soldier saw that the psychological interests and broad human sympathies of the University man had their uses in helping to maintain a good spirit, and to get the best work out of men who were experiencing hardships of a kind that they had never known before. And in the days of danger and death a good many officers felt the need of an articulate philosophy of life and death, and recognized that Oxford and Cambridge had given their sons the power to evolve one, while Sandhurst and Woolwich had not.

Other University men there are who have preferred to remain in the ranks of the Army. Who shall say that they are

shirking their responsibilities? The men also need the wisdom that they have gathered, for they, too, have to face death and wounds with the poorest mental equipment for doing so. And in the ranks the student will find that his philosophy is becoming practical, that his dreams are being fulfilled, and that he is the interpreter of a wider experience of life than even he ever imagined.

A SENSE OF THE DRAMATIC

XII

A SENSE OF THE DRAMATIC

ENGLISHMEN have a horror of being thought "theatrical" or "*poseurs*." If a man is described as "theatrical," they immediately picture a person of inordinate vanity and no real character striving after outward effect. He may be a petty criminal of weak intellect, glorying because he is the centre of a Police Court sensation, and because his case and his photo are in all the evening papers. He may be a mediocre and not too honest politician trying to exploit some imaginary scandal to increase his own notoriety. These are the types that the Englishman associates with being "theatrical" or a "*poseur*," and he hates and despises them. But by

"a sense of the dramatic" I mean something absolutely different. I mean getting outside yourself and seeing yourself and other people as the characters of a story. You watch them and criticize them from a wholly detached point of view. You just want to see what sort of a story you are helping to make, and what points of interest it would be likely to offer to an outside observer. There is no vanity or superficiality or egoism about this. It is simply realizing the interest in your own life, and it will often enable you to see things in their proper perspective, and so to avoid being bored or oppressed by circumstances which you cannot alter.

After all, every life has a certain amount of interest and romance attached to it if looked at from the right angle. Every one can see something interesting in another fellow's life. We all experience at times a curiosity to know what it feels like to be something quite different from

what we are. It is a relic of our childhood, when we used to play at being anything, from the Pope of Rome to a tram-conductor. But it is nearly always the other fellow's job that is interesting, and hardly ever our own. There is romance in dining at the Carlton, except to the *habitués* of the place. There is romance in dining for a shilling in Soho, unless you are one of the folk who can never afford to dine anywhere else. If you are rich there is romance in poverty, in wresting a living from a society which seems to grudge it you. If you are poor there is romance in opulence and luxury. There is romance in being grown up if you are a child, and there is romance in youth if you are old or middle-aged.

Now a sense of the dramatic means that you see the romance in your own life. If you are rich, it will enable you to see the munificent possibilities in your wealth, as the poor man sees them. You will catch

at an ideal, and try to live up to it. Every now and then you will get outside yourself, and compare yourself with your ideal, and see how you have failed. If you are a workman it will enable you to understand the glory of work well done, of strong muscles and deft fingers, of a home which you have built up by your own exertions. Without this sense the rich man is bored by the easiness of his existence, and will always be striving after new sensations, probably unwholesome ones, in order to stimulate his waning interest in life; while the poor man will become oppressed by the grinding monotony of his existence, and will become a waster and a drunkard.

Suppose you are an uncle. If you have no sense of the dramatic you will miss all the fun in tipping your small nephew. You will do it with no air at all. You will do it in a mean and grudging spirit. You will wonder how little you can with decency give the young rascal, and will

dispense it with a forced smile like the one which you reserve for your dentist. The urchin will probably make a long nose at you when your back is turned. But if you have a sense of the dramatic, you will see the possibilities of the incident from the nephew's point of view. You will understand the romance of being an uncle. You will disburse your largess with an air of genial patronage and bonhomie which will endear you to the boy for ever. You will go away feeling that you have both been a huge success in your respective parts.

A sense of the dramatic is, of course, closely connected with a sense of humor. If you have this faculty for getting outside yourself and criticizing yourself, you will be pretty sure to see whether you look ridiculous. If you are a real artist in the exercise of the gift, you will also see yourself in your right perspective with regard to other people. The artist must

not be an egoist. He must not allow the limelight to be centred on himself. He will see himself, not as the hero of the story, but as one of the characters—the hero, perhaps, of one chapter, but equally a minor character in the others. The greatest artist of all, probably, is the man who prays, and tries to see the story as the Author designed it. He will have the truest sense of proportion, the most adequate sense of humor of all. Undoubtedly prayer is the highest form of exercising this sense of the dramatic.

Probably there is no one to whom this saving grace is more essential than to the fighting soldier, especially in winter. Every detail of his life is sordid and uncomfortable. His feet are always damp and cold. He is plastered with mud from head to foot. His clothes cling to him like a wet blanket. He is filthy and cannot get clean. His food is beastly. He has no prospect of anything that a civilian would call

decent comfort unless he gets ill or wounded. There is no one to sympathize with his plight or call him a hero. If he has no sense of the dramatic, if his horizon is bounded by the sheer material discomfort and filth which surround him, he will sink to the level of the beast, lose his discipline and self-respect, and spend his days and nights making himself and everyone else as miserable as possible by his incessant grumbling and ill-humor. On the other hand, if he has any sense of the dramatic, he will feel that he is doing his bit for the regeneration of the world, that history will speak of him as a hero, and, like Mark Tapley, he will see in his hardships and discomforts a splendid chance of being cheerful with credit. He will know that God has given him a man's part to play, and he will determine to play it as a man should. There are many men of this kidney in the army of the trenches, and they are the very salt of the

earth. They have been salted with fire. They are the living proof that pain and suffering are something more than sheer cruelty—rather the conditions which turn human animals into men, and men into saints and heroes fit for the Kingdom of God.

Imagination has its disadvantages; but on the whole, and when well under control, it is a good quality in a leader. Often in war, when the men are tried and dejected, and seemingly incapable of further effort, a few words of cheer from a leader whom they trust will revive their spirits, and transform them into strong and determined men once more. The touch of imagination in their leader's words restores their sense of the dramatic. They see the possibilities in the part which they are called upon to play, and they resolve to make the most of it. The appeal so made is generally not one to individual vanity. In the picture of the situation

which his sense of the dramatic conjures up it is not himself that the soldier sees as the central figure. Probably it is his leader. He sees himself, not as an individual hero, but as a loyal follower, who is content to endure all and to brave all under a trusted captain. He looks for no reward but his leader's smile of approval and confidence. His highest ambition is to be trusted and not to fail. Happy is the leader who can command such loyalty as this! And there are many such in the army of the trenches.

Here, again, religion gives the highest, the universal example of the particular virtue. The most perfect form of Christianity is just the abiding sense of loyalty to a divine Master—the abiding sense of the dramatic which never loses sight of the Master's figure, and which continually enables a man to see himself in the rôle of the trusted and faithful disciple, so that he is always trying to live up to his part.

No, a sense of the dramatic is not theatrical, not conducive to, or even compatible with egoism. It is a faculty which gives zest to life: putting boredom and oppression to flight; stimulating humor, humility, and idealism. It is of all faculties the most desirable, being very agreeable to honor and to true religion.

A BOOK OF WISDOM

XIII

A BOOK OF WISDOM

It is said that a certain eminent Doctor of Divinity once summed up a debate on some knotty theological problem in the following terms: "Well, gentlemen, speaking for myself, I think I may venture to say that I should feel inclined to favor a tendency in a positive direction, with reservations." It is easy to sneer at such an attitude; but in reality it is rather splendid. Here was an old man, who had spent the greater part of his life in studying the fundamental problems of metaphysics and history, and at the end of it all he had the courage to confess that he was still only at the threshold of the house of Knowledge. At least he had realized the

magnitude of his subject, and if we compare him with the narrow dogmatists of other ages, we shall be forced to allow that in his exceeding humility there was some greatness, nobility of mind, and dignity. At the same time it must be confessed that such an attitude does not lend itself to expression in a terse, definite form; and that, unfortunately, is what is needed by the men who are busy doing the hard work of the world. The ordinary man wants something simple and applicable to the problems with which he has to deal. He wants a right point of view, so that he can see the hard facts which crowd his life in their proper perspective. He wants Power, that he may be able to master the circumstances which threaten to swamp him. For the nebulous views of modern theology he has little use.

Of course, theoretically the pastor should mediate between theology and life, having a working knowledge of both. Unfor-

tunately, but not altogether unnaturally, the hierarchy is timid. Ordinands are discouraged from learning too much about life, lest they err in strange paths and lose their way. Equally they are discouraged from penetrating too far into modern theology, lest they get lost in the fog. They are advised to be content with the official guides to both; and the official guides are somewhat out of date, and in them accuracy and adequacy are apt to be sacrificed to simplicity. The net result is that the ordinary man does not receive much help from the Church in his attempts to get a mental grip of life and death.

Indications are not wanting that the present crisis may evolve teachers of a new kind in the ranks of the clergy and the professors. Many clergy have enlisted in non-combatant corps, and must there have gained a much deeper sense of the needs of ordinary men than they ever acquired

in the University, the clergy school, and the parish. Some of the younger dons have also plunged into life, and they may be expected to produce literature of a new type when they return to their studies. Perhaps we shall see again something analogous to the old books of wisdom: shrewd commentaries on life couched in short, pithy sentences. If so, they will be refreshing reading after the turgid inconclusiveness of most modern theology. In this article will be found what may prove the first fruits of the crisis. It is, in its way, a little book of wisdom. The writer, though not yet entirely emancipated from the traditions of his type, seems nevertheless to be feeling after greater clearness of expression and more definite views. Here is a short history of how he came to write it.

He wished to be a clergyman; but he rejected the advice of his elders, and lost himself in the mists of modern theology. There he wandered contentedly for some

years, until one day he discovered that his nation had gone to war in what he conceived to be a righteous cause. To the astonishment of his friends, he immediately came out of the cloud, and announced his intention of taking part in the struggle. Being of gentle birth, he was urged to apply for a commission; but, laughingly dubbing himself "a mere dreamer," he preferred the humbler lot of a private soldier. What follows is taken from his notebook. In it he jotted down from time to time what he considered the chief truths which his study and his experience of life had impressed upon his mind. There is no conscious connection between the various groups; but the dates give one a clue which enables one to see how each group is connected with a particular phase of his experience, and to trace the development of his mind due to the reaction of these successive phases. Thus June, 1914, sees him preoccupied with abstract

problems, trying to mark his tracks as he wanders through the mists. August sees him turning from his mind to his conscience, and nerving himself to decisive action. In September he was already becoming an empirical rather than an abstract philosopher. In October and December the barrack-room had compelled him to try to define the place of religion in practical life. In February, 1915, he is contrasting religion with theology, to the disadvantage of the latter. In May and June death is teaching him the supreme truths. But let his words tell their own story—

"*June* 20, '14.—Do not think to 'get to the bottom of things': most likely they have not got one.

Agnosticism is a fact: it is the starting-point of the man who has realized that to study Infinity requires Eternity.

Only he who has failed to perceive the immensity of the universe and the insignificance of man will dare to say 'I know': ignorance is always dogmatic.

Where knowledge is exact it is merely descriptive: it tells the how, but not the why, of a process.

Agnosticism is no excuse for idleness: because we cannot know all, it does not follow that we should remain wholly ignorant."

"*August* 5, '14.—Knowledge is not a right end in itself: the aim of the philosopher must not be to know, but to be somewhat.

The philosopher who is a bad citizen has studied in vain.

The law said: 'Thou shalt not kill'; the Gospel says: 'Thou shalt not hate.' It is possible to kill without hatred.

The Gospel says: 'Love your enemies.' That means: 'Try to make them your friends.' It may be necessary to kick one's enemy in order to make friendship possible. A nation may be in the same predicament, and be forced to fight in order to make friendship possible."

"*August* 10, '14.—Rank in itself is one of the false gods which it is the business of religion and philosophy to dethrone.

Outward rank deserves outward respect: genuine respect is only accorded to real usefulness.

Rank is only valued by the wise when it offers opportunity for greater usefulness.

To know one's limitations is a mark of wisdom: to rest content with them merits contempt.

There is no dishonor in a humble lot—unless one is shirking the responsibilities of one more exalted.

The wise man will take the lowest room; but only the shirker will refuse to go up higher.

To fear a change in one's manner of life is to be the slave of habit: freedom is a chief object both of religion and philosophy.

Here are two contemptible fellows: a philosopher without courage, and a Christian without faith."

"*September* 1, '14.—The interest of life lies largely in its contrasts: if a man finds life dull it is probably because he has lacked the courage to widen his environment.

To have a wide experience is to inherit the earth: with a narrow horizon a man cannot be a sound thinker.

Experience is the raw material of the philosopher: the wider his experience, whether personal or borrowed, the more sure the basis of his philosophy."

"*October* 15, '14.—Man is the creature of heredity and circumstance: he is only the master of his fate in so far as he can select his environment.

Sordid surroundings make man a brute: friendship makes him human: religion begins to make him divine.

Religion means being aware of God as a factor in one's environment: perfect religion is perceiving the true relative importance of God and the rest.

Some men are brutes: most are human: very few begin to be divine."

"*December* 5, '14.—Almost all men are slaves: they are mastered by foolish ambitions, vile appetites, jealousies, prejudices, the conventions and opinions of other men. These things obsess them, so that they cannot see anything in its right perspective.

For most men the world is centred in self, which is misery: to have one's world centred in God is the peace that passeth understanding.

This is liberty: to know that God alone matters."

"*February* 2, '15.—Optimism is the condition of successful effort: belief in God is the only rational basis of optimism.

To offer a sound basis for optimism, religion must take count of facts: the hardest fact is the existence of unmerited suffering.

Religion is feeling and aspiration: theology is the statement of its theoretical implications.

Religion is tested by experience: theology by logic and history.

Christianity survives because the Cross symbolizes the problem of pain, and because its metaphysical implications have never been finally settled.

Christianity is a way, and not an explanation of life: it implies Power, and not dogma."

"*May* 25, '15.—In the hour of danger a man is proven: the boaster hides, the egotist trembles; only he whose care is for honor and for others forgets to be afraid.

It is blessed to give: blessed is he of whom it is said that he so loved giving that he was glad to give his life.

Death is a great teacher: from him men learn what are the things they really value.

Men live for eating and drinking, position and wealth: they die for honor and for friendship.

True religion is betting one's life that there is a God.

In the hour of danger all good men are believers: they choose the spiritual, and reject the material.

The death of a hero convinces all of eternal life: they are unable to call it a tragedy."

"*June* 1, '15.—I have seen with the eyes of God. I have seen the naked souls of men, stripped of circumstance. Rank and reputation, wealth and poverty, knowledge and ignorance, manners and uncouthness, these I saw not. I saw the naked souls of men. I saw who were slaves and who were free: who were beasts and who men: who were contemptible and who honorable. I have seen with the eyes of God. I have seen the vanity of the temporal and the glory of the eternal. I have despised comfort and honored pain. I have understood the victory of the Cross. O Death, where is thy sting? *Nunc dimittis, Domine.* . . ."

A MOBILIZATION OF THE CHURCH

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XIV

A MOBILIZATION OF THE CHURCH[1]

I HAVE recently read two books, both dealing with the probable effect of the war on the Churches. One of them was by a clergyman of the Church of England, and the other by a Nonconformist layman. Both agreed that the Churches were hopelessly out of touch with the average laity, and both were concerned with the problem which will confront the Churches

[1] As a matter of fact, nearly all ordinands of the Church of England, being of the right age and sound of limb, have enlisted or been granted commissions in the Army. In addition many of the younger clergy have found their way into the ranks of the R.A.M.C., and even of combatant units. The writer has, however, retained the article because he is convinced that the present crisis is, for the Church of England, an unprecedented opportunity for either making a fresh start or committing suicide.

when the war is over, and the fighting men return to their civilian occupations. These men will return from their experience of hardship and danger, pain and death, in a far more serious frame of mind than that in which they set out. Then, if ever, will they be willing to listen if the Churches have any vital message for them, any interpretation to offer of their experiences, any ideal of a practical and inspiring kind to point to. If the Churches miss that opportunity, woe betide them! It may be centuries before they get such another. So far both writers were agreed, and also in their anxiety, that the Churches were not fit to grapple with that opportunity, that they were too remote in their methods and doctrines from real life to be able to give a lead to men whose minds were full of real problems. But in their remedies for that unfitness the two writers were wholly at variance. The clergyman looked to his colleagues for help. They must cut

themselves loose from the business of parochial and philanthropic organization on which at present so much of their energy is expended, but which is not really their proper work. Instead they must devote themselves to cultivating a deeper spirituality, repair more diligently to the Mount of God, there to receive enlightenment and revelation. The layman, on the other hand, abandoned the clergy as hopeless. They did not know enough about life to be of any use in this work. It was laymen, men who had shared the experiences of "the lads," who would have to be their prophets and interpreters. It was not in the ordinary services of Church or Chapel that the returning soldiers would find the sort of religious teaching and worship which they needed, but in Adult Schools and P.S.A.'s organized by their fellow laymen—men who had struggled and suffered at their side, and had found and tested in their own experience

how communion with God can raise a man, and make him contented and clean and useful.

Personally, my sympathies are much more with the Nonconformist than with the clergyman. The clergy are out of touch with the laity. They do not as a rule understand the real difficulties and temptations of the ordinary man. The sin against which they preach is sin as defined in the Theological College, a sort of pale, lifeless shadow of the real thing. The virtue which they extol is equally a ghost of the real, generous, vital love of good which is the only thing that is of any use in the everyday working life of actual men. Although there are brilliant exceptions, this is almost bound to be the case as long as the majority of ordinands are segregated in the artificial atmosphere of the clergy school before they have any experience of life; as long as the work of the younger clergy is so largely concerned

with suffering women's gossip, ministering to the amusement of children, and trying to help the hopeless, so that they have no time or opportunity for free intercourse with the adult male inhabitants of their parishes; as long as the old traditional mistrust exists between clergy and laity, due in no small measure to the refusal of the Church as a whole to face the facts of modern science and research, and breeding as it does misconception on the one side and reticence on the other; as long as the teaching and worship of the Church continue to be a compromise between the two historic parties to an outworn ecclesiastical controversy rather than the interpretation of the real needs and aspirations of living men. As long as these are the outstanding features of clerical training and life and method it is difficult to see how anyone can expect the average clergyman to be able to help or lead his brethren of the laity. It is useless for him to go to Horeb until he

has understood the life in the streets of Samaria. It is useless for him to spend more time in praying until he has more to pray about. And the situation is not going to improve one bit if the younger clergy are kept back from taking their share in the nation's present struggle. If, while men of every class and every profession are uniting in the common life of service, the ordinands and younger clergy are alone withheld, at the end of the war they will be more out of touch with the laity than ever. In such circumstances one could only agree with the Nonconformist writer that after the war it is laymen who must minister to laymen, while the clergy are left to attend to the women and children. But since the Bishop of Carlisle has had the courage to declare that he can find no reason either in the New Testament or in the Canons of the Reformed Church why clergy should not be combatants, one is emboldened to

ask whether there is not opened up a yet more excellent way.

Suppose the Church were mobilized so that the majority of the younger clergy and all the ordinands were set free for service in the Army, the situation at the end of the war might be very different from that which we have been anticipating. There is no life more intimate than that of the barrack-room. There is no life where the essential characters of men are so fully revealed as the life of the trench. Those of the combatant clergy who returned from the war would know all that was worth knowing of the characters of ordinary men. They would have seen their weaknesses in the barrack-life at home, in the public-house and the street. They would have appreciated their greatness in the life of the trenches. They would know their potentialities and understand their limitations. They would be able to link the doctrines of religion to

the lives of men, and to express them in language which no one could fail to understand. With such men as clergy a new era might dawn for the Church in this land, and the Kingdom of Heaven be brought very nigh.

The Church could be mobilized so as to set free a large number of the younger clergy, if only her leaders could see that the greatness of the opportunity made the sacrifice worth while. To begin with, an enormous amount of ordinary parochial work could be discontinued for the duration of the war with very little loss. A large amount of relief work could be dispensed with, men's clubs could be shut, men's services suspended. Visiting could be confined to the sick, and a good deal of the work among women and children handed over entirely to lady helpers. A large number of older men could, if they were public-spirited enough to consent, be set free to take the place of younger men. It is

being done in almost every other profession, so why not in the Church? The majority of the city churches could be temporarily shut down, and in almost all large towns quite a third of the churches could be closed. Of course, parochial work at home would suffer; but that is a sacrifice from which we should not shrink—in view of the unique nature of the opportunity.

The chief fear of the Bishops seems to be that there might be a dearth of clergy at the end of the war. Personally, I believe that the reverse would be the case. There are in the ranks of the Army many men who at one time have contemplated being ordained, but who have been greatly discouraged during the past year by realizing more intimately the conditions with which the Church has to deal, and perceiving more acutely than ever before her inability to deal with them satisfactorily. Such men, if they knew that the Church was resolved to learn, was resolved to make

sacrifices in order to establish a new contact between herself and the laity, would be confirmed afresh in their determination to help her. If ordinands are scarce, it is simply because the relations between the clergy and the laity are so lacking in cordiality, and the obvious way to secure a larger number of ordinands is to cultivate better relations with laymen.

The opportunity is indeed great. All that is wanted is faith from the leaders of the Church, and loyalty from the other incumbents. The younger clergy will need no pressing. They are splendid fellows, most of them, fully alive to the disadvantages of their position, full of enthusiasm for any scheme which would enable them to restore cordial relations between themselves and their brethren, and would give them the intimate knowledge which they need before they can preach a living Gospel. Mobilize the older clergy, and mobilize the noble and efficient army of women

helpers, and parishes at home will not suffer very much: while the mission to men will be prosecuted under conditions more favorable than have ever occurred before, or are ever likely to occur again.

A STUDENT, HIS COMRADES, AND HIS CHURCH

XV

A STUDENT, HIS COMRADES, AND HIS CHURCH

It is with many misgivings that "A Student in Arms" offers the present article to his readers. It is so horribly egotistical, being frankly a record of personal experiences and resultant personal beliefs, that it can only be written in the third person. He has no right to imagine that any one is interested in his personal opinions or history, and yet he has a feeling that a certain number of his readers are inclined to class him as a bit of a fraud, and that is a state of affairs which he does not want to continue. "Who is this fellow? Some of his articles aren't bad; but why this bitter and prejudiced attack on the Church, and this

hasty and unjust condemnation of the clergy, when a few weeks ago he was pretending to be a Churchman himself? Probably he is one of these modern sentimentalists who are full of sloppy ideals, and empty of sound principles: whose beliefs are nebulous, and their ideals impracticable." That is the sort of judgment that he wants to appeal against.

In order to render what follows intelligible it is unfortunately necessary to go into a little bald personal history. The Student was in a Service battalion, and very early in the proceedings was made a sergeant. He remained a platoon sergeant for about nine months, with "the beloved Captain" as his subaltern. Then, for reasons which only concern himself, he descended with a bump to the rank of private, and was transferred to a different company. He is now a temporary second lieutenant on probation—for his sins.

So much for that. Now one Sunday

morning the Student, who is now transferred to the home establishment, went, as his custom is, to Holy Communion, where he took the Bread and Wine in the visible company of the sergeant-major's wife and daughter. But when he shut his eyes he saw a whole host of figures that he knew and loved kneeling, as he thought, at his side. Yet this was the perplexing part, that so far as he knew, a great many of them had never been to Communion in their lives, or even to Church, unless they were marched there. They were his old comrades. Then afterwards, when he ought to have been at Matins, he was wandering through the woods like any heathen, and the same throng accompanied him. In fact all that day he had only to shut his eyes, and there they were.

There was Fred, who had been his assistant sergeant in the old platoon. There he was, with his short, stodgy figure,

his red cheeks and waxed mustaches, his black eyes and truculent voice. For eight long months they had slept and worked and amused themselves side by side, with never an angry word or a misunderstanding, never a note of jealousy or of pique. They had grown in mutual understanding and respect and affection without ever saying a word about it. Then, on the last night, when the Student told his chum that he was to be a private the following day, Fred the inarticulate spoke words that the Student will never forget: words which showed a sympathy, an understanding, and a generosity which a man is lucky to meet with once in a lifetime.

Then there were the boys of the old platoon. There was Wullie, the dour pessimist from Manchester way, who died in England. Wullie was, I doubt not, a good workman in civil life; but he was sadly awkward at his drills. The Student,

who was his sergeant, was forever pointing out his deficiencies, as it was his business to do; but at last Wullie could bear it no longer, and losing his temper told the sergeant in the plain language of the North Country that he had him set, and did not give him a chance. And because the Student who was his sergeant kept his temper, and was able to recognize the genuine grievance of a real trier, and answered with soft, encouraging words, Wullie never forgot it, and was his staunch supporter till the end.

Then there was Tommy, the Londoner with the big nose and the lively temperament. Tommy was Wullie's chum, because both were straight, clean-living men, and faithful to their wives. And though their temperaments, aye, and their class, were so different, their principles were the same, and both had suffered for them in the rough life of the working world.

There was Dave, too. Dave was a pit

lad from Lancashire. His speech was plain and homely, not to say pungent. His humor was quaint and pithy. His strength and will to work were without equal. He was a faithful and loving husband and father to the little woman and the kiddies in the far Lancashire village; and because the Student who was his sergeant was once able to help him a bit to go and see a child who was dying, Dave never forgot it. And when the sergeant fell from his high estate Dave said "nowt," but used to purloin his mess tin and make it shine like silver, for in that art he was mighty cunning; and the Student knew what he meant, and will not forget.

Then there was little Jim from Brum, ætat. sixteen. He had the awkward grace of a young colt, and the innocent, pathetic eyes of an antelope, mischief and secret mirth lurked in the corners of his mouth, and his heart was strong and undismayed like the heart of a young lion. Jim shall not be forgotten.

Besides these there were the lads of the company in which the Student found himself after his descent. There was Billy who, when the Student was feeling rather awkward and dazed after his rapid fall in rank, took possession of him, and constituted himself the most loyal and unselfish friend that ever man had; Billy, the most modest lump of efficiency that ever wore a stripe and shall wear a star.

There was D——, the genial boon companion, generous friend, and faithful lover. There was Albert, the silent and reserved and observant, who did not quickly give his loyalty to any man, but who, when he did give it, gave without stint. There was Jack, the lion-hearted bomber, who was always most cheery when cheerfulness was at a premium.

These are but a few of the comrades with whom the Student held silent communion that Sunday morning; yet only one of them had ever knelt at his side in

the flesh to receive the Bread and Wine of Life. They were the comrades of a year ago. Now they are scattered. Some are dead and some maimed, some are still fighting, and some promoted. Never again shall they meet in this world. Yet the Student prays that if ever he forgets them, or is ashamed of them, he may be cut off from the company of honest men. Of the Church in which he believes they are members, whether they know it or not. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit in Whom he believes are their God too, whether they know it or not. For the Father is the Giver, and the Son is the Lord, and the Spirit is the Inspirer of all good life; and if these were not good the Student is a blasphemer, and calls evil good, and good evil. The Student calls himself a Churchman. He believes in the Holy Catholic Church invisible, wherein is and shall be gathered up "all we have hoped and dreamed of good." He also

calls himself an English Churchman. But he will never be satisfied or cry "All's well" till the Church of England is the Church of all good men and women in England, and until all the good thoughts and deeds in England are laid at the feet of the Lord of All Good Life, through the medium of His body the Church. Yet when he criticizes the Church of England he is not blaming any particular body of men such as the clergy. Organization, methods, clerisy, laity, all are lacking. Human nature is frail and sinful. These things must be so. Yet he accounts it damnable treachery, faithlessness, and blasphemy to sit down under it. To rest content with the inevitable is surely the negation of faith.

MARCHING THROUGH FRANCE

XVI

MARCHING THROUGH FRANCE

We were on our way to the front; but from the general attitude of the men you might have thought that we were on a cheap tour. The "management" was subjected to much criticism. The train was very far from being a *train de luxe*. We had boarded it in the dark. Forty men with forty packs and forty rifles had tumbled, no one quite knew how, into a pitch-dark van, and somehow sat down. At first we most of us sat on each other; but by degrees, and with much wriggling, we managed to separate ourselves more or less, and squatted through long hours in cramped, contorted attitudes. At length, in the small hours, the train stopped, and

we bundled out, to find ourselves in a diminutive French town. There was nothing very interesting or sensational about it as far as we could see. The houses were modern, and of a dull red brick. The road was cobbled, and uncomfortable for marching. One could not quite say why, but it certainly had an unfamiliar air about it. It was somehow different to any English town. There was an indefinable something about the architecture of the jerrybuilt villas which betrayed the workings of a foreign mind. We were cold and tired and stiff, and we decided then and there that France was a failure, and that we should have done better to stay at home. We marched through a dull flat country with occasional farms, and avenues of trees appearing in ghostly fashion through the early morning mist. They did not plant trees in avenues like that in England, and we condemned the practice as inartistic.

Very, very tired, we at last arrived at

a large barn, and entering lay down in the thick straw, and were soon fast asleep. A short sleep accomplished wonders. We woke to find the May sunlight streaming in through the chinks of our barn. We felt a good deal less critical than we had; in fact we were prepared to be rather excited at the novelties that life was offering. The barn was big and airy, and the straw clean and sweet. We felt encouraged to investigate farther. Outside we found a meadow clothed in long green grass, dotted with one or two big trees, and full of wild flowers. In a corner was a pond of clear water. We stripped, found a bucket, and poured water over ourselves, and then lay down in the long grass and basked in the sun. We were tasting the joys of the simple life—the life of the tramp, for instance; and we thought that if it were always May, and if the sun always shone, there might be a good deal to be said in its favor. We felt our British respectability

slipping away from us. The glamour of vagabondage caught us. When we returned to our office in the City or our shop in the suburbs we would take another holiday after this fashion, and wander down English lanes one spring morning, with a rucksack on our back. We would sleep in an English barn, or under an English hedge, and bathe in the water of an English pool. What would Aunt Maria say? A fig for Aunt Maria! We were losing our prejudices, and becoming Bohemian in our tastes. We knew then, as we had never known before, what it is to be young in the sweet springtime. We had never felt like this, even at Brighton or Southend! There was something exquisitely clean and wholesome about this picnic life.

We stayed at the village for several days. In the morning we would go for a walk round the country. It was rather amusing, except that the "management" insisted on our carrying all our luggage

on our backs wherever we went. In the afternoon we would go and bathe in a canal half a mile away. In the evening we were free to roam about the village. It was not a bit like an English village. There didn't seem to be any proper shops, and nearly every cottage had something for sale. Large, flat, round loaves, lovely fresh butter, and milk and eggs, delicious coffee, weak beer, and cognac—these were obtainable almost anywhere, at the farms and cottages alike. And these French villagers had a wonderful way with them. Somehow you never felt like a customer. You were made to feel like an old and valued friend of the family. You went into a cottage marked "Estaminet," and you ordered your glass of beer. You sat and sipped it *en famille*, with Madame making coffee or cooking supper on the big stove, Mamselle sewing in the corner, and Bébé playing on the floor. Sometimes there was a Monsieur, too, but if so he was an old

gentleman who smoked his pipe, and smiled genially at you. If you could talk any French, *tant mieux*. There was plenty to talk about, and everyone joined in with an easy, well-bred courtesy worthy of the finest gentleman. Ah, they were wonderful people, those good villagers of —— !

Somehow they had the faculty of being sociable and friendly without any adventitious aids. The Englishman cannot be quite at his ease with a stranger unless he has stood him a drink, or eaten with him. The English cannot sell you anything and at the same time make you feel that you are a guest rather than a customer. We felt that there was something to be said for the French, after all.

Of course there were no young or even middle-aged men in the village. They were all—well, making a tour in Belgium and Eastern France. That evidently made a difference. Imagine an English village visited by a number of young Frenchmen.

If there were no young Englishmen about, but only women and old men, no doubt they would be received with open arms. The young women would mildly flirt with them, the older women would mother them, and the old men would be quite paternal. But imagine the effect if the English youths suddenly returned. Then there would be jealous lovers, jealous sons, jealous husbands. The women would have to curb their hospitable inclinations. The youths of the two nations would look down their noses at each other, and find each other "gesticulating monkeys" or "mannerless boors." Each would try to feel the better race, and would turn to the women as judges of their quarrel. No, perhaps it was just as well that at —— there were no young Frenchmen. As it was we were regularly fêted, and being on our best behavior felt that we were a success. What could be more pleasant or gratifying?

We did not stay at —— very long. Soon

we were *en route* for Belgium. This time we marched, which would have been very pleasant if we had not had to carry all our own luggage. As it was, the marches proved very tiring. The only advantage of a pack is that it makes a very comfortable pillow if you do get a chance to lie down. Every hour we had a short halt, and lay flat on our backs by the side of the road, with our packs under our heads, and were happy. We marched through several nice little French towns, with fine old churches and *hôtels de ville*, and generally a pleasant square in the center, full of seductive-looking *auberges* and *cafés*. Unfortunately the "management" did not elect to let us linger in these jolly little towns, but hurried us on to some sequestered farm on the confines of a small village, and billeted us in a barn. We got to know quite a lot about barns. They are very nice if they are clean; but when they have been slept in by about fifty successive

parties in a few months they begin to lose their charm. The straw loses its sweetness, and the water of the pond its crystal clearness. Often we would crowd into a barn in the semi-darkness, and, having with difficulty found six feet of floor space for ourselves and our belongings, discover beneath our heads a little trove of decaying bully, or damp, moldy biscuits. We got used to it; but it was objectionable at first. On the whole, though, we did not fare too badly. There was generally a hospitable little *estaminet* to visit in the evening, and a cup of lovely hot coffee to be had at the farm in the morning. The sun was always shining, the grass green, and the wild flowers blooming. We said that France was not a bad place to be in in the springtime.

To our destination we gave never a thought. Such is the way of youth. What was the good of worrying? We would take things as we found them. But when we got into Belgium the stern realities of

war began to obtrude themselves. The towns which we passed through were half empty. Broken windows, holes in the roof, and here and there the whole front of a house missing, told their story of when the war had swept that way. The people in the villages were no longer genially hospitable. They wore an anxious look, and were obviously out to make money if they could. Our beer was badly watered, and our chocolate cost us more. We did not like Belgium very much.

Finally we came to the trenches themselves, and all around was desolation and ruin. There are few more mournful spectacles than a town or village lately reduced to ruins. The ruins of antiquity leave one cold. The life that they once harbored is too remote to excite our sympathies. But a modern ruin is full of tragedy. You see the remains of the furniture, the family portraits on the wall, a child's doll seated forlornly on a chair, a little figure of the

Virgin under a glass case. In the middle of the little square is a little iron bandstand, and you can almost see the ghosts of the inhabitants walking up and down, laughing, chatting, and quarreling, with no sense of the disaster overshadowing them. You wonder what became of them. The girl whose rosary lies on yonder dressing-table, and who doubtless prayed every night before that little figure of the Virgin, was she raped by some bloodstained Uhlan? Or did she escape in time to relations or friends at a safe distance? And to what purpose were all these homes sacrificed? Why are all these good people scattered and beggared and fugitive? *Cui bono?* On the Day of Judgment someone will have to answer. As we thought of the pleasant towns and villages that we had left behind, with their honest, kindly inhabitants, we set our teeth and resolved that, if we could prevent it, the receding tide should never return over the fair lands of France.

So long we stayed in these scenes of desolation that we almost forgot what a live town looked like. It is hard to describe the delights of the journey home, made in far other fashion than the journey out. As we sat in the corner of our carriage in the *train de luxe*, and watched the busy life of the towns through which we passed, we felt as if we had awakened from a nightmare. But that was many months ago, and now that we are sound of limb again we hear the call of desolate Belgium and threatened France, and long to do our bit once more to hasten that slowly receding tide of devastation.

FLOWERS OF FLANDERS

XVII

FLOWERS OF FLANDERS

EVERYONE knows that war means to the soldier a big measure of deprivation. Every week the recognition is made by thousands of womenfolk at home, when they dispatch the parcel of little luxuries to their "boy" at the front. And at the front we could only marvel at the aptness of the contents which love had unerringly chosen. Generally the parcel contained eatables—a home-made cake, fruit, chocolate, and what not. Often, too, it contained vermin-killers, carbolic soap, or clean underlinen. And the senders were right. They remembered our love of good food, and they remembered our cold tubs and extravagant laundry bills; and as a matter of fact these were,

for most of us, the luxuries which we had most prized, and the loss of which we chiefly mourned.

Every week, however, there used to come to the writer an envelope containing a gift more exquisitely subtle—a soft handkerchief wrapped round a sprig of verbena or of lavender. It was so out of keeping with every circumstance of one's life, so like a breath of fragrance from another world, that its preciousness was infinite, unspeakable. It brought with it memories of the deep quiet of old gardens, the prim brightness of herbaceous borders, and all things dainty and most utterly remote from the sordid business of trench warfare. It was the source of the most intimate personal delight; but at the same time it must be confessed that it did also arouse and point that feeling of deprivation which is never quite absent from life in the trenches. It revived the finer perceptions which had become dulled by constant

contact with the squalid makeshifts of an artificially primitive life—perceptions which one had perhaps been content to see atrophied, feeling that if one had to live like a savage it were best to become like one. It was, paradoxically enough, at once a consolation and an irritant: a narcotic bringing sweet dreams of the unattainable, and a tonic stimulating inconvenient faculties into a new and insistent life.

The laziness which made one content to "sink i' the scale" and become a brute was checkmated. The æsthetic faculties, once roused, refused to die of inanition, and found food even in the rest camp and the trenches. One suddenly realized that one was living very close to Nature, far closer perhaps than ever in one's life before, and that Nature in June is wondrous kind to her lovers. To sleep in the long grass, to be awakened by the pale spreading gold of dawn, to bathe in the clear waters of a pool, and to lie down after among the ragged

robins and forget-me-nots while the sun grows warmer and warmer is a joy that does not come to those who live in stout dwellings of brick and stone; but it is the daily experience of soldiers in some rest camps The trouble is that they do not always realize the joy of it. They bury their heads in their blankets and curse at being awakened so early. But to the man who has had his æsthetic faculties aroused it is an experience pregnant with exhilaration and delight. And even when he leaves the rest camp for the firing line he finds that in some ways man's calamity has been Nature's opportunity. Villages are wrecked, crops ungathered; but Nature has rioted unchecked. Never were such meadows, deep, thick with mingled grass, and oats, and barley, full of cornflowers, poppies, campions, marguerites, and other delights. Many a man, glancing back over the rich meadows in the early dawn, after a night of sleepless anxiety, must have felt as he

never felt before the compelling charm of Nature run wild. But it is then that the trouble becomes acute. The contrast between the full joyous harmony of spring and the sordid strife of men is too great to be borne with a quiet mind. It makes a man restless and discontented. It fills him with a love of life and a loathing for the days of danger and discomfort to which he stands by honor committed. War is an exacting trade, demanding stern courage and endurance, and perhaps life itself, and it does not make a man a better soldier to rail against it and condemn it. The æsthete does not make a good fighter.

Some men, faced with this dilemma, find it best to turn their backs resolutely on the meadows behind the trench, and to account Nature a traitress and a temptress. They can find no synthesis between the joy of life and its destruction, no bridge between honor and duty on the one side and red ragged robins, provokingly lovely,

on the other. Like St. Paul, they are careful to sow only spiritual things, that they may gain eternal life.

Well, it is better to be a Puritan than a beast, and it may be that even Paul would have found no room for flowers in the hour of life and death. But if we go to a greater than Paul, He will show us a more excellent way. The Puritan fails to see the Spirit in the beauty of the flowers, and the æsthete sees only the sordidness in pain and death. But Paul's Master showed the beauty of both. He saw in the lilies of Galilee the tokens of a Father's love, an assurance of the beauty of the life which is eternal, while the Cross, with its tradition of sordid degradation, He raised to be the symbol of love divinely beautiful, and of life triumphant over death.

And if the Master was right—if beauty is one and life eternal—is not the problem solved? Then we see with new eyes.

Scarlet poppy, blue cornflower, red ragged robins, and all that company of gaily dressed fellows are not the pagans we thought them, but good Churchmen after all. To be gay and debonair just for a day is the work that the good Father has given them. It is their beauty and His glory, and therefore it is our pure joy to have them nodding at our feet. On the other hand, the same good Father has laid it on men to offer their life for an ideal. If we fought from blood-lust or hate, war would be sordid. But if we fight, as only a Christian may, that friendship and peace with our foes may become possible, then fighting is our duty, and our fasting and dirt, our wounds and our death, are our beauty and God's glory. The glory of the flowers is one and the glory of the man is another, but both alike belong to the One Father and Creator of all.

THE HONOR OF THE BRIGADE

XVIII

THE HONOR OF THE BRIGADE

The battalion had had a fortnight of it, a fortnight of hard work and short rations, of sleepless vigil and continual danger. They had been holding trenches newly won from the Germans. When they took them over they were utterly unsafe. They had been battered to pieces by artillery; they were choked with burst sandbags and dead men; there was no barbed wire; they faced the wrong way; there were still communication trenches leading straight to the enemy. The battalion had had to remake the trenches under fire. They had had to push out barbed wire and build barriers across the communication trenches. All the time they had had to be on the

watch. The Germans were sore at having lost the trenches, and had given them no rest. Their mortars had rained bombs night and day. Parties of bombers had made continual rushes down the old communication trenches, or crept silently up through the long grass, and dropped bombs among the workers. Sleep had been impossible. All night the men had had to stand to their arms ready to repel an attack, or to work at the more dangerous jobs such as the barbed wire, which could only be attempted under cover of darkness. All day they had been dodging bombs, and doing the safer work of making latrines, filling sandbags for the night, thickening the parapet, burying the dead, and building dug-outs. At first they had hardly received any rations at all, the communication with the rear had been so precarious. Later the rations had arrived with greater regularity; but even so the shortage, especially of water, had been terrible. For

several days one mess tin of water had had to satisfy half a dozen men for a whole day. They had not grumbled. They had realized that it was inevitable, and that the post was a post of honor. They had set their teeth and toiled grimly, doggedly, sucking the pebble which alone can help to keep at bay the demon Thirst. They had done well, and they knew it. The colonel had said as much, and he was not a man to waste words. They had left the trench as safe as it could be made. And now they had been relieved. They were out of danger, slogging wearily along the road to the rest camp. They were sick with sleepiness. Their shoulders ached under their heavy packs. Their feet were sore. Their clothes, which they had not changed for a fortnight, were filthy and lousy. They no longer attempted to march in step or to hold themselves erect. Each man limped along as best he could. They were dead tired; but they were not dejected.

They were going to rest; they were going to sleep long and soundly, undisturbed by bombs. They were going to drink their fill of good hot tea and thin Belgian beer. They were going to get stews of fresh meat instead of the eternal Chicago bully. They were going to have a hot bath, and be served out with clean shirts and socks. They were far from dejected. The thought of all these good things to come gleamed in their eyes as they marched, and also the thought that they had done well and had upheld the honor of the New Army, the brigade, and the proud regiment whose name they bore.

A few even began to talk. "Say, mate," remarked one, "ow'd a good ole feather bed do now?" "Ah, and a nice steak and chips when you got up in the morning." "Ah, and what's wrong wiv a pint o' good British beer to wash it dahn wiv?" "And the old woman a-bringing yer a cup o' tea in the morning to your bed?" "And a

nice fire in the kitchen while you reads your paper." "Gahn! Wot's the good of talking silly? 'Ow many of us d'yer think'll ever see 'ome agin?" "Well, mate, there's no 'arm in wishing, and they do say as we shall all 'ave a week's 'oliday arter the brigade's come aht of the trenches the next time."

Soon the talk died down. The chill air of the hour before dawn began to exert its proverbial power of depression. The men felt cold and clammy, they had an acrid taste in their mouths, their spirits seemed to fall to zero. They dragged their feet along the cobbled road with a savage, sullen look on their faces. The last stage of exhaustion was almost reached. A young subaltern, who had been taught that the time to enforce discipline is when the men are tired, started to shout at them: "Keep up there! Pick up the step! Left —left—left, right, left." The men's faces darkened a shade. A few muttered curses

were heard. For the most part they ignored him. The captain, an old campaigner, called him off curtly.

At last they reached the field where they were to bivouac. The dawn was already breaking, and the air beginning to warm. The battalion formed up in column of companies, four long double lines. Arms were piled, and the men marched clear. Then they lay down as they were in rows upon the grass, and the sun rose over a field of sleeping men.

Two hours passed. Away in the distance could be heard the incessant rattle of musketry, mingled with the roar of the big guns. No one heeded it. A motorcycle appeared at express speed. The colonel was roused, the company commanders sent for. The men were wakened up. Down the lines the message passed: "Stack valises by platoons, and get ready to march off in fighting order; the Germans have broken through." The men were

too dazed to talk. Mechanically they packed their greatcoats into their valises, and stacked them. The Germans broken through! All their work wasted! It was incredible. Water bottles were filled, extra ammunition served out, in silence. The battalion fell in, and marched off along the same weary road by which they had come. Two hours' sleep, no breakfast, no wash, no drink. The men were dejected now.

The road was full of troops. Columns of infantry slogged along at the side. Guns and ammunition-wagons thundered down the paved center. Motor dispatch riders flew past with fresh orders for those in rear. The men sucked their pebbles in grim silence. It was no time for grumbling. This meant business. They forgot their fatigue, their thirst, their hunger. Their minds were full of the folk at home whom they might not see again, and of the struggle that lay before them. So they marched, silently, and with frequent halts,

most of the morning. At length they left the road and took to the fields. They were going back whence they had come, by a circuitous route. Shrapnel burst overhead. As they neared the firing line they met streams of wounded returning from the scene of action. The company commanders took charge. One company rested to let another pass, and the men exchanged greetings. Men spoke to each other who only knew each other by sight. An officer caught the eye of a corporal and they both smiled, and felt that there was some curious link between them, hitherto unguessed.

A captain said a few words to his men during a halt. Some trenches had been lost. It was their brigade that had lost them. For the honor of the brigade, of the New Army, they must try to retake them. The men listened in silence; but their faces were set. They were content. The honor of the brigade demanded it. The captain had said so, and they trusted him. They

set off again, in single file. There was a cry. Someone had stopped a bullet. Don't look round; he will be looked after. It may be your turn next.

They lay down behind a bank in a wood. Before them raged a storm. Bullets fell like hail. Shells shrieked through the air, and burst in all directions. The storm raged without any abatement. The whistle would blow, then the first platoon would advance, in extended order. Half a minute later the second would go forward, followed at the same interval by the third and fourth. A man went into hysterics, a pitiable object. His neighbor regarded him with a sort of uncomprehending wonder. He was perfectly, fatuously cool. Something had stopped inside him.

A whistle blew. The first platoon scrambled to their feet and advanced at the double. What happened no one could see. They disappeared. The second line followed, and the third and fourth. Surely

no one could live in that hell. No one hesitated. They went forward mechanically, as men in a dream. It was so mad, so unreal. Soon they would awake. . . .

It appeared that there was a trench at the edge of the wood. It had been unoccupied. A couple of hundred yards in front, across the open ground, was the trench which they were attacking. Half a dozen men found themselves alone in the open ground before the German wire. They lay down. No one was coming on. Where was everyone? They crawled cautiously back to the trench at the edge of the wood, and climbed in. One or two were there already. Two or three wounded men limped in from the rear, and sank on the floor of the trench. The storm raged on; but the attack was over. These were what was left of two companies. All stain on the honor of the brigade had been wiped out—in blood.

There were three men in a bay of the

trench. One was hit in the leg, and sat on the floor cutting away his trousers so as to apply a field dressing. One knelt down behind the parapet with a look of dumb stupor on his face. The third, a boy of about seventeen from a London slum, peered over the parapet at intervals. Suddenly he disappeared over the top. He had discovered two wounded men in a shell hole just in front, and was hoisting them into the shelter of the trench. By a miracle not one of the three was hit. A message was passed up the trench: "Hold on at all costs till relieved." A council of war was held. Should they fire or lie low? Better lie low, and only fire in case of attack. They were safe from attack as long as the Bosches kept on firing. Someone produced a tin of meat, some biscuits, and a full water-bottle. The food was divided up, and a shell bursting just in rear covered everything with dirt and made it uneatable. The water was re-

served for the wounded. The rest sucked their pebbles in stoical silence.

Supports began to trickle in, and the wounded who could not stand were laboriously removed from the narrow trench to some dug-outs in the rear. Two of them were badly hit, and crying out incessantly for water, or to shift their position. One was unconscious and groaning. From the wood came frenzied shouts from a man in delirium. The more slightly wounded tried to look after the others; but soon the water was exhausted, and all they could do was to promise that as soon as darkness fell help would come.

Darkness fell. The battalion had been relieved; but the better part of it lay out in the wood, or in the open before the wood, dead or dying. The wood was full of groaning. Four stretcher-bearers came and took away one man, an officer. The rest waited in vain. An hour passed, and no one else came. Two were mortally hit,

and began to despair. They would die before help came. For Christ's sake get some water. There was none to be had.

A man wounded in the leg found that he could crawl on all fours. He started to look for help. He crawled laboriously along the path through the wood. It was choked with corpses. He crawled over them as best he could. Once he found a full water-bottle, which he gave to a sentry to send back to his mates. At last he was picked up, and taken to the doctor, while others went to look for his mates.

The doctor was in a field. Rows of wounded lay there waiting for stretcher-bearers to come and take them to the ambulances. As many as could went on, those wounded in the leg with their arms on the shoulders of those whose legs were whole. They limped painfully along the interminable road till they came to the ambulance. Then their troubles were over. A rapid drive brought them to the dressing

station. There they were given cocoa, inoculated for tetanus, their wounds washed and bound up. Another drive took them to the camp by the railway. Next morning they were put in the train, and at length reached the hospital. There at last they got the longed-for bath and the clean clothes and—joy of joys—were put to sleep, unlimited sleep, in a real bed with clean white sheets. They were at peace. But out in the open space between the trenches lay some they had known and loved, unburied. And others lay beneath wooden crosses behind the wood. Yet it was well. The brigade was saved. Its honor was vindicated. Though its men might be fresh from home and untried in war, they would not fail. The brigade had had its baptism in blood, and its self-confidence was established for all time.

NOTE.—The action described in the above article has been identified by correspondents

at the front, and so it is necessary to state that although based in the main on an actual experience, features have been freely borrowed from other occasions, and the writer has no authority for placing the construction that he has on the main event.

THE MAKING OF A MAN

XIX

THE MAKING OF A MAN

On the barrack square of a Special Reserve battalion you may see both the raw material and the finished product —the recruit but newly arrived from the depot, and the war-worn veteran, with anything over one year's service, just discharged from hospital. The change wrought in one year is remarkable. It "sticks out all over." It is seen in their physique, their bearing, the poise of their head, their expression, and most of all in their eyes. The recruit is not set. He stands loosely. He is never still. His expression is always changing. His eyes are restless. Now he is interested, and his pose is alert, his eyes fixed on the instructor. Now his

attention is distracted elsewhere, his attitude becomes less tense, his eyes wander. Now he is frankly bored, his head and shoulders droop forward, he stands on one leg, his eyes are fixed on the ground. His movements reflect every passing mood. His will is untrained, his character unformed, his muscles undeveloped. He has no control over his mind or his limbs. He is just a boy. The fascination about him lies in his potentialities, in the uncertainty as to how he will turn out. There are so many pitfalls ahead of him. . . . The trained soldier, who has fought, seen death, suffered wounds, endured hardness, offers a complete contrast. He is thicker. His limbs are quiet and under control. He stands solidly motionless and upright. His mouth is firmly shut. His eyes are steady, and their expression unvarying. His whole attitude and his expression suggest quiet expectancy. He is still; but he is ready to move at a second's notice. He is intensely

self-controlled. Of course all generalizations are untrue. But probably this is how the contrast between the recruit and the trained soldier would present itself to anyone who watched a number of them as they paraded on the barrack square.

Recruits come from all sorts of classes in these days, and so it is not easy to describe a "typical case" which would not offend quite a number of them. Yet this, I think, is a fair specimen of perhaps the commonest type: All his life he had lived in a stuffy little home in a big town with a mother and father, and a swarm of brothers and sisters. He had lived there, but he had not spent much time there, and it had not been by any means a determining factor in his life. In the early morning he had tumbled out of bed in the semi-darkness, pitched on such clothes as he had discarded for the night, swallowed a cup of strong tea and a slice of bread-and-dripping, and without the ceremony of a wash or

brush-up dashed off to work. There he had carried on a sort of guerrilla warfare on his own account against anyone and everyone who seemed inclined to "put it on him." It was rather amusing, and distinctly helped to make life interesting. He and his mates all played the same game of trying to do less than their share of the day's work, while appearing to do more. He did what he was told—when he could not help it. In his warfare with the foreman each had a trump card. The foreman's trump was "the sack," and the boy's was the right to "chuck the job." The boy had played his trump two or three times, without suffering from it overmuch, and two or three times the foreman had played his. But on the whole "work" had been much less of a discipline than one might expect. It had taught him one idea, which is somewhat less than a truth, that a man's first duty is to stick up for himself, and avoid being put upon. In the evening

he used to dash off home, indulge in a good wash of the exposed portions of his anatomy, brush his hair, eat a hurried tea, and go off to meet his pals, male and female, in the street. Though he hadn't got much money to spend there was always a certain amount of amusement to be got out of the street, and by the time he reached home he was glad to get to bed. It was an odd existence, with much more interest and variety than you would think. But it was not a particularly wholesome one. It developed no fixity of purpose, and there was no real discipline in it. His father occasionally asserted his authority with sudden spasmodic violence, usually ill-timed. Otherwise there was practically no authority in it at all.

Then came the time when his mates began to disappear. Posters stared at him from the hoardings telling him that his King and country needed him. Recruiting sergeants eyed him doubtfully.

He did not look much more than sixteen. Here was a chance of variety. His restless temperament responded to the suggestion with enthusiasm. He loved change, and feared monotony above all things. Besides, he would be on his own. Even the shadow of parental control would be removed. He would be a man, and his own master. So he reckoned! "Mother" noticed his excitement, and with a sure instinct guessed what was the matter. "Our George is going for a soldier," she remarked to her husband. "I can see it in 'is eyes." "Father" taxed him with it, and waxed indignant. "Ain't yer satisfied with yer 'ome?" he demanded. "Ain't yer got no gratitood to yer mother? Don't know when yer well off, yer young fool." This clinched matters. The boy said nothing. He could afford not to. His answer was to enlist next day. When it was done "Mother" shed a surreptitious tear, and "Father" grunted; but both

were secretly proud of him, though it meant seven shillings a week less in the family exchequer. He went away feeling a little lost and young, and with a lump in his throat for the sake of the home that he had valued so cheaply.

Freedom! He didn't find much of that after all! The barracks were full of authorities far more peremptory and potent than foreman or father. There was the corporal of his room, who unsympathetically kicked him out of bed in the morning—bed being a mattress on the floor—and made him wash, and do his share of cleaning up the room. There was the sergeant who made him march up and down the square all the morning, doing what he was told, and in the intervals lectured him on his duties, his morals, and his personal cleanliness. There was the sergeant-major, a terribly awe-inspiring person, to whom even the sergeant was deferential, and to whom the corporal was positively syco-

phantic. There were subalterns and a captain, mysterious beings from another world, whose business in life seemed to be to preserve an attitude of silent omniscience, and to criticize his personal appearance. Instead of freedom, he found discipline. His uprisings and his outgoings, and all the smallest details of his being, even to the length of his hair and the cleanliness of his toes, were ordered by Powers against whom there was no appeal. They held all the trump cards. He could not even "chuck the job" in the old lordly way, without becoming a criminal, and having all the resources of the police enlisted to bring him back.

Yet the despotism, though complete, was not brutal. Even the sergeant-major was genially abusive, while the subaltern was almost paternal. But these were only signs of the plenitude of their power. They could afford to be jovial! Indeed, he soon noticed that urbanity of manner

was apt to increase in a direct ratio to an individual's rank. It was the corporal, the least of all his masters, whose manner was least conciliatory. Submission was obviously the only course; and by degrees he learned to do more than submit. He learned the pride of submission. He came to believe in the discipline. He gained self-respect from his subordination to it, and when he went home on furlough, wearing the uniform of it, he boasted of it, to the evident envy of his civilian chums. He was learning one of the great truths of life, a truth that so many fail to learn—that it is not in isolation but as a member of a body that a man finds his fullest self-expression: that it is not in self-assertion but in self-subordination, not as an individual but as one of many brethren, sons of one Father, that a man finds the complete satisfaction of his instincts, and the highest form of liberty.

Our recruit has not learned quite all

this; but he has made a beginning. He has learned a certain pride in his company, in his regiment, in his N.C.O.'s even, and in his officers. He is learning to be proud that he is English. He has given up his personal freedom, which was not really of much use to him, and in return he has received what is infinitely more precious—his share of the common heritage of the regiment, its glorious past, its present prowess, its honor and good name, its high resolves. His self-respect has increased enormously. His bearing has altered completely. It is not the fear of punishment that makes him so smart and clean; but his care for the honor of his regiment. It is not the fear of punishment that makes him sweep and scrub and tidy his part of the barrack-room so scrupulously; but his care for the reputation of the company, his desire to please his officer, his loyalty to his corporal. Besides this, he is learning to share with his mates

instead of to grab. He is learning to "play the game" by them, and to think more of fairness all round than of his own personal benefit. He does his bit and takes his share, and as long as the other fellows do ditto, he is content. It is impressed on his mind that for the honor of the company they must all be tolerant, and pull together. Also he has a "chum." In the Army everyone has a "chum." As far as his chum is concerned the good soldier obeys the "golden rule" in its literal sense. He shares with him. He divides with him his parcel from home, he helps him to clean his rifle and equipment, he is a friend in the Baconian sense, who halves sorrows and doubles joys. The recruit is all the better for observing the golden rule even towards one person.

The recruit is developing rapidly. His perspective is altering hourly. Old prejudices are vanishing, and new ones forming. His old selfishness is giving way to

good comradeship, his individuality is being merged in a bigger corporate personality. As he becomes less of an individualist, he becomes quieter, and more contented. In a few months he will be drafted out to the front, there to learn harder lessons still, and lessons even better worth learning. He will learn to endure without complaint, to be unselfish without "making a song about it," to risk life itself for the good of the world, the honor of the regiment, and the safety of his comrades. A man does not rise much above that. Perhaps he will make the supreme sacrifice, and so be taken hence at his best. Perhaps he will return to "Blighty." If he does the latter he will be no longer a boy but a man.

HEROES AND HEROICS

XX

HEROES AND HEROICS

"FACILE descensus Averni," and the Avernus of the journalist in war time is a fatal facility for writing heroics. Everyone who has handled the pen of a scribe knows how the descent comes about. A man sees or experiences something which cries out for expression. He puts pen to paper, and the result is acclaimed as a little masterpiece. "Write more," say his friends, and he casts about for another theme which will bear the same heroic treatment. He tries to reproduce the dramatic staccato which came so naturally before; but this time the inspiration is lacking, the heroics are spurious, and the result is "journalese." His heroics

don't ring true. What cant is to religion, they are to heroism. They take what is fine and rare and make it cheap.

The typical Englishman hates heroics. He regards them as un-English. If he has done a fine action the last thing that he wants is for the fact to be exploited, advertised. It is not exactly modesty that prompts his instinct for reticence; it is something nearer akin to reverence. He does not want his pearls cast before swine. He knows that the beauty of a fine action is like the bloom of the wild flower, elusive, mystical. It will not survive the touch of the hot, greasy hands that would pluck the flower from its root and hawk it in the street. So when the "serious" journalist takes to heroics the typical Englishman takes refuge in satire, on exactly the same principle as when false sentiment invades the drama he abandons it for musical comedy.

The satirist always claims to be a realist,

though not everyone will admit his title. He mocks at the heroic, and says that he will show you the real thing. In war time no one can afford to be a satirist who has not done his bit, a fact which gives him an additional weight. Men like Captain Bairnsfather of the *Bystander* and "Henry" of *Punch* have earned the right to mock, and in their mockery they often get closer to the portrayal of authentic heroism than do their more idealistic brethren. Take Bairnsfather's picture of two Tommies sitting in a dug-out, while their parapet is being blown to smithereens about a yard away. It bears the legend, "There goes our blinkin' parapet again!" The 'eroes in the dug-out are about as unheroic in appearance as it is possible to imagine. They are simply a pair of stolid, unimaginative, intensely prosaic Tommies of the British workman type. They have low foreheads and bulgy eyes, "tooth-brush" mustaches and double chins; their hair is

untidy, and one of them is smoking a clay pipe. It is obvious that they are blasphemously fed-up. Of course they are not really typical at all. They are much too prosaic and unimaginative. But the picture does bring home to you that the fellows in the trenches are very ordinary people after all, which is a fact that folk at home are very apt to overlook. And at the same time, though the realism is too sordid to be quite true to life, it cannot hide the fact that the stoicism of the two 'eroes is rather heroic, in spite of their obvious lack of any sense of the dramatic.

Bairnsfather's sketches represent the extreme reaction from the heroic. His trench 'eroes are so animal in type and expression as to be positively repulsive. As the editor says in his introduction, "the book will be a standing reminder of the inglorious ness of war, its preposterous absurdity, and of its futility as a means of settling the affairs of nations." Yet for that very

reason it is an incomplete picture of war. It is perfectly true, and it is a good thing that we should realize it, that the majority of men go through the most terrific experiences without ever becoming articulate. For every Englishman who philosophizes there are a hundred who don't. For every soldier who prays there are a thousand who don't. But there is hardly a man who will not return from the war bigger than when he left home. His language may have deteriorated. His "views" on religion and morals may have remained unchanged. He may be rougher in manner. But it will not be for nothing that he has learned to endure hardship without making a song about it, that he has risked his life for righteousness' sake, that he has bound up the wounds of his mates, and shared with them his meagre rations. We who have served in the ranks of "the first hundred thousand" will want to remember something more than the ingloriousness of war. We

shall want to remember how adversity made men unselfish, and pain found them tender, and danger found them brave, and loyalty made them heroic. The fighting man is a very ordinary person, that's granted; but he has shown that the ordinary person can rise to unexpected heights of generosity and self-sacrifice.

The fact is that neither heroics nor satire are a completely satisfactory record of what we shall want to remember of this war. Least of all does the third type of war journalism satisfy—that of the lady who writes in the society paper of her "sweet ickle tempies with the curly eyebrows," and her "darling soldier-lad with the brave, merry smile."

Whether the Press forms or reflects public opinion is a moot point; but there is certainly an intimate correspondence between the two, as the soldier who is sent to "Blighty" finds to his cost. The society journalist pets him, the "serious"

journalist writes heroics about him, and the satirist makes fun of the heroics. He looks in vain for a sane recognition that he has earned the right to be taken seriously as a man. So, too, the society lady of a certain sort pets him, has him to tea at the "Cri," or invites him to Berkeley Square. The larger public lionizes him, gives him concerts and lusty cheers, takes his photo at every possible opportunity, and provides him with unlimited tobacco and gramophones. While the authorities satirize the lionizers by treating him exactly as if he really was the creature in Bairnsfather's sketches—a gross, brainless, animal fool, who cannot be trusted. This is all very well. I suppose that most men like to be petted by a pretty woman, specially if she has a handle to her name, though the charm soon wears off. Being lionized is boring, but has solid advantages. Satire is amusing on paper, though infuriating when translated into action. Very soon, how-

ever, the wounded soldier begins to long to be less petted, less lionized, and instead to be treated as a rational being who is entitled to a certain elementary respect.

One can only speak from personal observation. One place differs from another. But from what the writer has seen and experienced he judges that the one thing which a wounded soldier cannot expect is to be treated as a man. He is sent to "Blighty." He arrives at a hospital. His chief pleasure, oddly enough, lies in the prospect of seeing something of his relations and friends. He is surprised and indignant when he finds that he is only allowed to see visitors of his own choice two at a time, for two hours, twice a week. On the other five days he has to put up with the licensed visitors of the hospital. They may be very elevating and amiable people; but he feels no conceivable interest in them. He is still further dismayed when he discovers that under no circumstances may he visit his

home while he is a patient. He may go to tea with Lady Snooks, or the Duchess of Downshire; but not with his wife or his mother. The writer's neighbor in the hospital ward was a case in point. He was a man of about thirty who, at the outbreak of war, was holding a responsible position in Sydney. He had all the self-respect which is typical of the colonial of even a few years' standing. He was receiving ten minutes' electrical treatment per diem, with a view to restoring sensation to one of his hands. Otherwise he was able-bodied. His father lived within twenty minutes' walk of the hospital; but not only was he not allowed to live at home and attend as an out-patient, he was not even allowed to visit his home. He was told that the treatment would have to be continued for some six months, and meanwhile he must be a prisoner in the hospital. At the V.A.D. convalescent home to which the writer was subse-

quently transferred, and which was regulated from the hospital, there were several married men whose homes were within reach. They were absolutely forbidden to visit them. One man, who had been in hospital for nine months without ever going home, was so disgusted that he eventually took French leave for a couple of days. On his return he was put in the punishment ward of the main hospital, where he was deprived of tobacco and visitors, and was informed that when he was discharged he would be sent to his battalion for punishment! His comment was, "You'll see; when this war is over it will be just as it was after South Africa. We shall be so much dirt." When we did leave the grounds it had to be in the conspicuous garb of a military convalescent, that all men might stare, and under the escort of a nurse. Many a quiet, sensible fellow preferred not to go out at all.

Another example of the humiliation to which wounded soldiers are subject refers to their difficulty in obtaining their arrears of pay. One man, who had got the eight days' furlough to which a soldier is entitled on leaving hospital, could only obtain twenty-four shillings "advance of pay," though entitled to many pounds. It barely covered his train fare, and left him nothing for paying his living expenses (and his relations were very poor) or for pocket money. The Army is the only profession which I know in which a man receives, not the money to which he is entitled, but such proportion of it as the authorities like to disburse.

This is how the authorities satirize the lionizers, and not all the petting and the lionizing in the world will compensate for the denial of the elementary rights of a man, the right to choose his own visitors, to visit his own home, and to receive the money which he has earned.

A man soon tires of being petted and lionized, and craves in vain for the sane respect which is a man's due.

I am aware that there are many hospitals where soldiers are treated much more rationally, and I have never heard that they have abused their reasonable liberty. Nevertheless I feel that it is worth while to utter a protest against the state of affairs described above because it is, after all, so typical of the general failure of the Press, the public, and the powers that be to recognize that the soldier who has fought for his country has earned the right to be regarded as a man. He doesn't want to be petted. Heroics nauseate him. He is not a child or a hero. He is just a man who has done his duty, and he wants a man's due.

It is desirable that soldiers should receive their due now; but it is much more vitally important that when the war is over, and the craze for petting and lionizing has died down,

it should be recognized that the soldier who has fought for his country is something more than a pet that has lost his popularity, and a lion that has ceased to roar. There is grave danger that all that will survive of the present mixed attitude towards the soldier will be the attitude of authority, which regards him as an irresponsible animal. For after all, this attitude is just that which before the war poisoned the whole administration of charity, and the whole direction of philanthropy. Before the war a cry was heard, "We don't want charity, we want the right to live a wholesome life." Too often the reply of the "upper classes" was to denounce the "ingratitude" of the poor. The cry that we hear now—"We are not pets or lions, but men"—is the same cry in a new guise. It is the cry of the working classes for a sane respect. Be sure that when the war is over that cry will be heard no less strongly, for the working classes have proved their

manhood on the field of honor. In this time of trouble and good-will we have the chance to redeem the error of the past, and to lay the foundation of a nobler policy by adopting a saner, a wider, a more generous outlook; but we seem to be in a fair way to intensifying our error, and laying up endless difficulties in the days that are to come.

Concerning "A Student in Arms"

A Letter from a New York Clergyman

THE PARSONAGE—New York, February 27, 1917.
DEAR MR. DUTTON:—

I wish that every preacher-man from ocean to ocean might read *A Student In Arms*. I have just written my brother to get the book and make it the order of the day to read it, if he really wants his religion to be brought down to the ground on which ordinary men walk and to be introduced to the trenches in which life's problems are really being fought out and worked over. Any man who thinks it is all over with religion because the world is at war will get something of the same thrill, something of the same burning of the heart within him, which came to the disciples of Jesus when after Calvary they found out that it was not all over with this new life and hope.

It is a wonderful book and there never was a more timely gift. Next week I am to deliver, by invitation, five addresses to men on consecutive evenings. Every one of these addresses will have a definiteness of aim, a human appeal, a chance of doing some real good, for which a large share of credit will have to be given to *A Student In Arms*. If my message fails to reach the mark, it will be in spite of having had the help of one of the most vital and vigorous of books.

Yours sincerely and gratefully,
(Signed)———, A Congregationalist Minister.

An English Newspaper Article

THE SLAYING OF FEAR

At present it is my belief that there is nothing more important in the publishing world than the extending

fame and huge sale of *A Student In Arms*. The book, which has before been referred to here, was published nearly a year ago. Between May and August four fair editions were sold. Then came the author's death on the Somme, and a largely increased demand. Every week the demand has grown greater, and every edition has been larger than the preceding one. The twelfth edition, now announced, is ten thousand copies. That is a wonderful record for a book of the kind, but it is not all. After a year it has suddenly caught on in America, and is going like a flame. Canada is publishing a huge edition immediately, and cables are pouring in from South Africa, Australia and other parts of the British Empire. Purely from the point of view of a commercial success, *A Student In Arms* is probably the most notable literary event since the war broke out.

It was not, however, to tell the commercial story of this book—with which I have a rather intimate connection—that I quoted the foregoing figures. It was in order that one might inquire into the secret behind this great and increasing popularity. Only recently we have been looking at the matter of "significance in literature," and here is a book that supplies a modern illustration which is of the utmost importance. *A Student In Arms* was in itself of significance because it was the expression of the soul of the New Army from the double point of view of a private and an officer. The private found speech, and unconsciously revealed himself as the finest kind of hero. The officer, with more self-consciousness, described his own emotions and the thought that came to a man of his class when he was looking into the very jaws of hell. Here, then, is the explanation of the interest that the book excited from the very beginning. The understanding reader began to see, for the first time, the spiritual side of war; rejoiced because it showed some compensation for all the horrors, and was made confident of the final result,

since it revealed the unconquerable soul of the new two-million army, who could meet death with a smile and give up their lives without a regret.

The increasing popularity of the book is even more significant. It shows that the secret of the book is being discovered by the entire people of the British Empire, and by the people of America as well, in this grave crisis in the history of that nation. What is the secret? Briefly, it is contained in that sublime verse which is one of the most heart-breakingly beautiful things in the Burial Service: "*The last enemy that shall be destroyed is Death. O Death, where is thy sting? A Student In Arms* presents to us the sublime spectacle of an army of which practically every unit has slain fear. There is no greater deed in the moral and spiritual world than this. After fear is slain, the sublimest heroism becomes inevitable, and in one sense commonplace. That is why men who survive after the victory, with unaffected modesty, are mostly trubled with public ovation and recognition. "Any other fellow would have done the same," is a common remark. It is true, and the "Student" reveals the thrilling spectacle of a national army of two million men to whom the sublimest heroism is not only possible, but is the opportunity that each longs for.

In truth, this secret that the "Student" revealed in his book, and thereby made a national event of first-class importance, and won for himself an undying name in literature, has been occupying my mind almost continuously for many months. Constantly in my mind the line has been singing, "*Neither counted they their lives dear to them.*" For the reasons that have already been given, more than for the stateliness of its diction, that is one of the greatest verses in the whole Bible. The whole secret of martyrdom is in it; it expresses the destruction of "the last enemy," after which martyrdom was not only simple, but almost welcome. Fear is the instinctive and natural feeling of the most finely tempered soul in face of

imminent peril; but with them it is only the preliminary to a stage of spiritual exaltation. The fear is when they see only material force. The next stage is when they see "the chariots and the horses." After that it is easy to understand the recklessness of danger which is the result. In a recent article of Donald Hankey's that appeared, it is told of him that just before they went "over the top" he kneeled down with his men and spoke earnestly to them: "When we go over the top, it is either a wound and Blighty or death and the Resurrection." Who can doubt that he at least saw "the chariots and the horses," and knew that he would shortly be in their company?

The significance, then, of the *Student in Arms* wave that is now striking every shore of the British Empire, is that it conveys a proof that as a nation we are beginning to understand that "the last enemy" has got to be destroyed in life—that fear must be slain, and that until this happens we have not in this world war reached the stage at which victory is inevitable. Every parent who has a boy at the Front would like to believe that in the face of death he had the sustaining vision that the "Student" describes. The horrors of the war are so sickening, and the losses so appalling, that the whole head is sick and the whole heart faint when one thinks only of the body. When the eye is turned to the spiritual side, it is another matter. "Fear not them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do." Every great nation is free to-day because of the heroic souls, tempered by fire, who made this their practical watchword. They found it "sweet and beautiful to die for their native country," *Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*, as the Latin proverb has it. In the light of their sacrifice, fear is not only craven, but, being yielded to, is an indecency. It is the most sheer materialism; it puts body above spirit, and in the last trial reckons not with spirit at all. The

"Student" says no words like this in the pages of his book, but that is the message that shines out—clear, bracing, inspiring. I should not wonder if this book, by a layman, in which there is no pietism, but only high devotion, and no creed in the ordinary sense, but only profound religion expressed in Christian terms, were to be the means of the religious revival which so many people believe will be the outcome of the war.

ALAN NORTHMAN.

In the *London Christian Outlook*, March 1, 1917.

Short Extracts from U. S. Newspaper Reviews

His book is like nothing else that has been published in English. . . . It is no wonder that many thousands of copies of this book have been required in England to meet continuing demand. It answers many questions which thoughtful persons are asking about the war's inner meaning—questions that may come home to us.——*N. Y. World.*

A Student in Arms is bursting with things we all want to know. It is well worth reading and possessing.——*Baltimore Evening Sun.*

Wherever there are men at war, this is a book not only for the men who fight but for those who must remain at home—perhaps more for the latter than for the former.——*Philadelphia Press.*

This book will live, despite the ever-increasing flood of its fellows, because of its beautiful spirit and tone.——*Chicago Herald.*

For Americans the book will increase our conviction and resolve that our army must be a citizen army, based on universal service, and that the natural

democracy of such a mingling must be fostered by every means in our power.——*N. Y. Tribune.*

Hankey kept his finer individuality intact, and saw comrades at arms with the vision of spiritual understanding. His thoughts, simply expressed, sound a finer note in the rush of "realistic" comment.——*Boston Herald.*

If the war has produced a single book in Germany approaching the fine and human qualities of Donald Hankey's *A Student in Arms* (Dutton), some friend of the Germans should immediately translate it and promote its circulation. It would be the best sort of German propaganda.——*N. Y. Globe.*

His book is unusual, intensely different, and indicates that in his death England lost a valuable man—one philosophic, humorous, religious, and gifted with literary ability.——*Detroit Free Press.*

This book deserves a place beside Rupert Brooke's sonnets and *Mr. Britling Sees it Through.*——*N. Y. Churchman.*

They are unique among war correspondence in that they present very little of material facts and dwell almost entirely upon the effect upon the soul and mind of the private soldier of the conditions and activities of war.——*N. Y. Times.*

He is an open-minded inquirer; both because of the subject and of its literary merits the book will be read after the war excitement is over.——*N. Y. Sun.*

A "war book" of quite an unusual kind, dealing with the deeper things of human life—a book that will survive among the best of that eventful period.——*Richmond Times Despatch.*